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PREFACE.

IN this book the lessons, still preserving the narrative form, are so constructed as to be only one step in advance of the third book. Many of the lessons in the first part are as easy as those in the concluding portion of the Third Standard. They gradually increase in difficulty. Poetry suitable for children now takes the place of what in the earlier books cannot be dignified by a higher name than verses. Moral teaching enters into the narratives more largely than in the previous Standards, and a series of tales, original and selected, begun and continued in Books V. and VI., entitled 'Old World Stories,' form an attractive feature in the plan.

Dictation is taught by constructing at the end of each prose lesson a sentence or two composed of the more difficult words in the lesson. In this way almost all the spelling difficulties of the book are concentrated in comparatively few sentences. No dictation exercises follow the poetical pieces, as the teacher can easily dictate a verse

or two, or, by way of variety, direct his pupils to copy out a part or the whole of the poem.

Arithmetical Exercises cease at this stage, as the pupils are now presumed to have a text-book of Arithmetic in their hands.

STANDARD IV. OF THE REVISED CODE.

READING.—*A short paragraph from a more advanced reading-book used in the school.*

DICTION.—*A sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time from the same book, but not from the paragraph read.*

ARITHMETIC.—*A sum in compound rules (money).*



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STANDARD IV.

PART FIRST.

MARQUIS NIHIL AND MISS NIHILETTE.

[Spell and write]

educated, tapestry, guardian, attached, endeavoured, fortunately, horrified, civilised, unsuccessful, difficulties.

THE young Marquis Nihil and his sister, Miss Nihilette, had been educated to do nothing except to trifle their time over tapestry and sword-knots. At the ages of fourteen and fifteen they were removed from Paris to the country mansion of their guardian, for they were orphans. As it was the first time they had seen the country, they were very much surprised to see land growing other things than flowers, and trees in their natural shapes. Still more surprised were they to learn that in order to have bread, wheat had to be sown in the ground; that grass was necessary for the production of milk; and that wine did not flow out of casks on turning the key. They walked about amazed in fields round which there was no iron railing, and along river-banks without quays.

One morning they reached the shore of a little bay, on which there floated a small green boat. The young marquis, who remembered having once been in a similar boat on the river near Paris, entered it, followed by his sister. The cord which attached it to the bank became detached, and they were carried down the stream. The

young lady cried bitterly ; the marquis looked as brave as he could, and endeavoured, with the help of the oar, to guide the boat to the bank. But being quite ignorant how to use it, he only drove the boat more into the middle of the stream, which now began to widen and become dangerous.

Fortunately, they came to an island in the middle of the river, on which the boat stranded. The young people immediately landed. They ran in every direction over the island, expecting to find a post-office where they might write a letter to their friends ; but they met with nothing but cattle and sheep, and an empty cottage. They were then convinced that they had been cast on an uninhabited island like Robinson Crusoe, and were doomed to live without any resource but their wits—a prospect which horrified the young lady.

The young marquis, however, tried to keep up his courage, and said : ‘Do not despair, my sister, I think that with patience and industry we shall be able to provide for our subsistence. These cows cannot fail to furnish milk ; the fowls of this desert island no doubt lay eggs, as those of civilised countries do ; and I saw in the empty house we looked into a sack of the flour of which they say bread is made.’

Nihilette agreed that they had no other resource ; but when they thought of putting their plans into execution, they remembered that the cows had to be milked. Much puzzled, the young marquis had recourse to his courage, and drawing his sword, he advanced boldly to a cow, and threatened her with instant death if she did not at once give up her milk. The cow gazed at him with a calm and absorbed air while continuing to chew her cud, so that the poor little marquis had to put up his sword again in its sheath. He was equally unsuccessful with the fowls.

Meanwhile Nihilette, who had gone into the empty house, was equally unlucky. She went from the door to the window, and from the window to the door; she saw the sack of flour, but could not imagine what use to make of it. The fire, besides, was out, and she knew no way of lighting it except by calling her maid Catherine.

Hours slipped away while they were in these difficulties, and they began to suffer from hunger. The marquis looked in a sad plight, and his sister gave herself up to tears. The sun began to decline, and both left the house once more to look for food. Above them were hazel-nuts and chestnuts, but they did not know what they were; the former being covered with green leaves, and the others with their outer envelope.

In the midst of their distress they heard a shout behind them, and looking back, they saw several men and women landing on the island. These were the occupants of the deserted house, who had been to the mainland for hay. These good people could not restrain their laughter when they heard the marquis's story; but they kindly took him and his sister to their house, and gave them an excellent meal. All that they ate was composed of what the island yielded; thus teaching the youthful couple that to profit by resources, it is not enough to possess them, but that we must also know how to make use of them.

Adapted from the French.

[Write from dictation]

Educated by their guardians to nothing useful, the young people had no resources, and were horrified to find themselves alone on the island. Fortunately, the arrival of the people who owned the deserted house delivered them from their difficulties. They learned by their adventure to value life in the fields as highly as the civilised life of great cities.

THE CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.

1.

Now ponder well, you parents dear,
These words which I shall write ;
A doleful story you shall hear,
In time brought forth to light.
A gentleman of good account
In Norfolk dwelt of late,
Who did in honour far surmount
Most men of his estate.

2

Sore sick he was, and like to die,
No help his life could save ;
His wife by him as sick did lie,
And both possess'd one grave.
No love between these two was lost,
Each was to other kind ;
In love they lived, in love they died,
And left two babes behind.

3.

The one, a fine and pretty boy,
Not passing three years old ;
The other, a girl more young than he,
And framed in beauty's mould.
The father left his little son,
As plainly doth appear,
When he to perfect age should come,
Three hundred pounds a year ;

4.

And to his little daughter Jane,
Five hundred pounds in gold,
To be paid on her marriage-day,
Which might not be controlled :

But if the children chanced to die,
Ere they to age should come,
Their uncle should possess their wealth—
For so the will did run.

5.

‘Now, brother,’ said the dying man,
‘Look to my children dear;
Be good unto my boy and girl,
No friends else have they here:
To God and you I recommend
My children dear this day;
But little while be sure we have
Within this world to stay.

6.

‘You must be father and mother both,
And uncle all in one;
God knows what will become of them,
When I am dead and gone.’
With that bespake their mother dear,
‘O, brother kind,’ quoth she,
‘You are the man must bring our babes
To wealth or misery.

7.

‘And if you keep them carefully,
Then God will you reward;
But if you otherwise should deal,
God will your deeds regard.’
With lips as cold as any stone,
They kissed their children small:
‘God bless you both, my children dear!’
With that their tears did fall.

8.

These speeches then their brother spake
To this sick couple there :
'The keeping of your little ones,
Sweet sister, do not fear.
God never prosper me nor mine,
Nor aught else that I have,
If I do wrong your children dear
When you are laid in grave.'

9.

The parents being dead and gone,
The children home he takes,
And brings them straight unto his house,
Where much of them he makes.
He had not kept these pretty babes
A twelvemonth and a day,
But, for their wealth, he did devise
To make them both away.

10.

He bargained with two ruffians strong
Which were of furious mood,
That they should take these children young
And slay them in a wood.
He told his wife an artful tale
He would the children send
To be brought up in fair London,
With one that was his friend.

11.

Away then went those pretty babes,
Rejoicing at that tide—
Rejoicing with a merry mind,
They should on cock-horse ride.

They prate and prattle pleasantly,
As they ride on the way,
To those that should their butchers be,
And work their lives' decay.

12.

So that the pretty speech they had,
Made murder's heart relent :
And they that undertook the deed,
Full sore did now repent.
Yet one of them, more hard of heart,
Did vow to do his charge,
Because the wretch that hired him,
Had paid him very large.

13.

The other won't agree thereto,
So here they fall to strife ;
With one another they did fight
About the children's life :
And he that was of mildest mood,
Did slay the other there,
Within an unfrequented wood :
The babes did quake for fear !

14.

He took the children by the hand,
Tears standing in their eye,
And bade them straightway follow him,
And look they did not cry ;
And two long miles he led them on,
While they for food complain :
'Stay here,' quoth he, 'I'll bring you bread,
When I come back again.'

15.

These pretty babes, with hand in hand,
Went wandering up and down ;
But never more could see the man
Approaching from the town :
Their pretty lips with blackberries
Were all besmeared and dyed,
And when they saw the darksome night,
They sat them down and cried.

16.

Thus wandered these poor innocents
Till death did end their grief,
In one another's arms they died,
As wanting due relief :
No burial this pretty pair
Of any man receives,
But Robin Redbreast piously
Did cover them with leaves.

17.

And now the heavy wrath of God
Upon their uncle fell ;
Yea, fearful fiends did haunt his house,
His conscience felt a hell :
His barns were fired, his goods consumed,
His lands were barren made,
His cattle died within the field,
And nothing with him stayed.

18.

And in the voyage to Portugal
Two of his sons did die ;
And, to conclude, himself was brought
To want and misery.

He pawned and mortgaged all his land
Ere seven years came about,
And now at length this wicked act
Did by this means come out :

19.

The fellow that did take in hand
These children for to kill,
Was for a robbery judged to die,
Such was God's blessed will.
Who did confess the very truth,
As here hath been displayed :
Their uncle having died in gaol,
Where he for debt was laid.

20.

You that executors be made,
And overseers eke,
Of children that be fatherless,
And infants mild and meek ;
Take you example by this thing,
And yield to each his right,
Lest God with such like misery
Your wicked minds requite.

Old Ballad.

THE CHERRY-STONE.

[*Spell and write*]

amusement, laughed, injury, majority.

A little school-boy pressed a cherry between his lips
and threw away the stone. An old man picked it up and
planted it in the ground, much to the amusement of the
boy, who laughed at him for his pains.

Some time after the boy passed that way, and found the cherry-stone grown into a little shrub. The old man still tended it, and preserved it from injury.

‘What is the use of all this trouble?’ thought the boy.

When he became a man, he one day passed along the same road, and found the shrub now a tree, and laden with fruit, and at length he understood the old man’s conduct.

[*Write from dictation the last sentence.*]

OLD WORLD STORIES.

TALES OF HERCULES.

BIRTH AND EDUCATION.

[*Spell and write*]

pleasure, behaved, javelin, guitar, inattentive.*

Hercules was the son of Jupiter and Alcmena. Amphitryon was the stepfather of Hercules, but he loved Hercules as if he had been his own son. Amphitryon and Alcmena had a son, whose name was Iphicles, and he was the step-brother of Hercules. Hercules and Iphicles did not lie in a cradle, like other babes, but in a great iron shield; in this their mother had made their bed, and when they had to be put to sleep, they were rocked in the shield. Hercules never cried.

Juno hated Alcmena, and wished to have Hercules

* The proper names are so difficult in the following lessons, that very simple words are used.

killed. It was midnight. Amphitryon and Alcmena were asleep, and by their bed both the infants were also asleep in the shield. Then crept two great snakes through a hole under the door into the sleeping-chamber, and glided along to the shield. The eyes of the snakes were as bright as fire, so that the whole room was lighted up. They raised their heads upon the side on which Hercules lay, and were about to bite him. But in trying to do so, they moved the shield, and Iphicles awoke. When he saw the great snakes, he began to cry fearfully, because he was afraid. Alcmena awoke, and seeing the light in the room, roused her husband Amphitryon, who sprang up and seized his sword, which hung upon a nail behind the bed.

When Hercules saw the snakes, he was not afraid, but, laughing, he seized with each hand a snake round the neck, and held it tight. The snakes were now unable to bite, and they wound their tails round him; but Hercules held them so tight, that they died. When they were dead, their eyes flamed no longer; and, when Amphitryon approached, the room was again dark. Then he called the servants, and told them to bring a light, and when they came Hercules pointed out the dead snakes and laughed, much delighted.

Hercules was a very large child, and ate much bread and beef, but no sweetmeats. He learned to read and write, and to ride and drive the two-horsed and the four-horsed chariot, and to shoot with the bow, and to throw the javelin, and to box.

There was a good centaur, called Chiron, who taught him to know the stars, and herbs, and plants, and told him all about these things, and the beasts of the field; and Hercules listened with pleasure and gladly learned. He

was very well behaved, and had only one fault, and that was that he became mad when he was angry and did harm, and then afterwards wept over what he had done when it was too late, and when he could not repair the wrong. Alcmena and Amphytryon had not punished him on account of this fault, because he was so young. He had a teacher called Linus, who taught him to play the guitar, and who struck him one day when he was inattentive, which made Hercules so angry, that he struck Linus on the head with the guitar, so that he died.*

TALES OF HERCULES—*continued.*

HE OVERCOMES THE MINYÆ, AND AFTERWARDS GOES MAD.

[*Spell and write*]

pastured, allowed, heralds, commander, conquered, imagined, consoled.

Then Amphytryon would no longer keep Hercules in his house, but sent him to take charge of his herds of cattle on a mountain. The mountain was not far from Thebes; it was quite covered with forests, and here the oxen pastured. Now, there lived in the forests a great and very fierce lion, which had torn in pieces many oxen, as well as herdsmen and other people, and this lion Hercules struck dead with an iron club. After that, Amphytryon allowed him to return home to Thebes.

The Thebans were obliged to send a hundred oxen every year to the king of the Minyæ; and this pleased

* As much as possible of this lesson should be written from dictation or copied out, as it forms an excellent exercise on all the more common monosyllables and dissyllables. A special dictation exercise is in such lessons superfluous.

Hercules very ill, for he could not bear that his city should pay tribute. So when the king of the Minyæ sent heralds to demand the oxen, Hercules cut off the noses and ears of the heralds, and drove them away. Then Erginus, king of the Minyæ, came to Thebes with a great army. The name of the king of Thebes was Creon; he was a coward, and had not the heart to go out against the enemy, and therefore he had always paid tribute. But now he made Hercules commander of his army, and with this the Thebans were very well content, and had great courage to take the field. Minerva gave Hercules a suit of armour, Mercury gave him a sword, and Apollo a bow and arrows; and the breastplate that Minerva gave him was of gold. Hercules and the Thebans conquered their enemies, and slew King Erginus; and the Minyæ were now obliged to send the Thebans *two* hundred oxen every year. Moreover, Creon gave Hercules his daughter Megara to wife, and she bore him three children. Hercules lived happily for some years at Thebes; but Juno made him sick, and in his sickness he became mad, and imagined his children to be wild beasts; then he took his bow and shot them dead. After he had done this, he saw that they were his children, and could not be consoled, but ran out of the city into the woods, and there wandered about.

[*Write from dictation*]

Heralds came to demand the herds pastured on the mountain; but Hercules being made commander, conquered the enemy. He afterwards slew his own children, whom, in his madness, he imagined to be wild beasts, and could not be consoled.

TALES OF HERCULES—*continued.*

HERCULES IS ORDERED TO SERVE A BAD KING.

[Spell and write]

oracles, questions, answer, dangerous, understand, ordered,
ornaments, patiently, beautiful.

When the ancients did not know what to do, they went to the oracles, and asked counsel of Apollo. The oracles were temples where a priest or a priestess sat, and answered the questions put to them, for Apollo told them what answers were to be given. When a king had a design of making war, he sent to consult an oracle; and if Apollo gave him to understand that he would be beaten, then he let the war alone.

The best oracle was at Delphi; here sat a priestess in the temple on a seat called a tripod, and gave answers to all who came. If they did what the oracle ordered, and things went well with them, they gave gifts of gold, or silver, or bronze ornaments to the temple, which was quite full of such presents. The priestess was called Pythia; and Delphi is in Greece, at the foot of Mount Parnassus.

The poor unhappy Hercules came to Delphi, entered the temple, and asked the Pythia what he was to do, for he was so sad because he had killed his children. The Pythia told him he was to go and serve King Eurystheus, and patiently do everything that he was commanded. She said that Eurystheus would lay upon him Twelve Labours, each one of which was so dangerous that it might be his death. But if he had good courage, and were patient, then the gods would help him; and after he had got over the Twelve Labours, he

would again be happy, and after his death would become a god.

King Eurystheus was a bad man, who had no courage, and did nothing that was good, and hated those who could do beautiful and good things. Hercules went away as he was ordered, and came into the presence of King Eurystheus, and said to him that Apollo had commanded him through the Pythia to serve him, and that he would do all that he should require of him.

[*Write from dictation*]

The oracles were spoken as answers to the questions of those who doubted how they ought to act; but those who asked and patiently heard, could not always understand.

THE BOY AND THE BEE.

1.

An idle boy had laid his head
Down in a meadow full of flowers,
With daisy buds around him spread,
And clover blossoms white and red,
So fragrant after showers.

2.

And as he lay with half-shut eye,
Watching the hazy light—came flying
A busy bee with laden thigh,
Across the blossoms growing by
The spot where he was lying.

3.

'Oh, busy bee,' the boy begun,
'Stay with me, now you've come at last;
I love to see across the sun,
Like gossamer so finely spun,
Your wings go sailing past.'

4

But with a low and surly hum,
The bee into a blossom flew,
As if the living creature dumb,
Had answered short: 'I cannot come,
I've something else to do.'

5.

'Oh, bee, you're such a little thing,'
The idle boy went on to say;
'What matters all that you can bring?
You'd better rest your silver wing,
And have a bit of play.'

6.

But with his sullen hum, and slow,
The bee passed on, and would not stay,
As though he murmured: 'Don't you know
That little things must work below,
Each in his little way?'

7.

I know not if the idler caught
This lesson from the busy bee,
But through his mind there came a thought
As it flew by him: 'Is there nought,
No work to do for me?'

8.

'My sister asked me, on the wall
To nail her rose's long green shoot,
The rose she likes the best of all,
Because the lady at the hall
In autumn gave the root.

9.

'Poor baby has been hard to cheer,
All day he would not sleep or smile,
I might go home and fetch him here,
And pluck him flowers, while mother dear
Should rest a little while.

10.

'Go dive into the clover red,
Old bee, and hum your surly tune,
And pack your honey close,' he said,
Upspringing from his grassy bed,
'I'll be as busy soon.'

TWELVE LABOURS ARE IMPOSED ON HERCULES.

FIRST LABOUR OF HERCULES.*

Then King Eurystheus told him he was to go to Nemea, and slay the lion. Nemea was a valley, with a thick wood between high mountains, in the country of Eurystheus. In this wood lived a very fierce lion, whose skin was so strong that no iron could pierce it; and when the herdsmen threw spears at him, they fell off without doing the least harm to the lion, who then sprang upon the herdsmen, and tore them to pieces.

Hercules took his stand in the wood, as hunters do, behind a tree, in order that the savage beast might not see him when he was about to shoot. Then the lion came through the wood. He had been eating oxen, and

* The words in this lesson, as in previous lessons on the same subject, are very easy, and a spelling lesson is superfluous.

his mouth and his mane were all bloody ; he kept licking the blood that was about his lips with his great tongue, and roared. When a lion roars in the wood, it sounds like thunder, and the earth trembles. He lashed his sides, and the trees close by, with his tail. Hercules shot his first arrow, but it glanced off. He shot a second time, but neither could this arrow pierce the lion's hide ; and yet if he had shot it at a man clad in armour, it would have passed through his breastplate and through his body. But now the lion saw Hercules, and sprang upon him. When a lion takes a spring, he crouches together, lays himself with his breast upon the ground, and draws his tail between his hind legs : he can leap a distance of twenty feet.

Hercules wrapped his mantle round his left arm, in order to ward him off with it, and in his right hand he took up a great club that he had hewn for himself in the wood, and with this he gave the lion a blow on the head. The lion was not killed, but remained standing on his feet ; he was now, however, a good deal frightened. Hercules then sprang upon him, seized hold of his neck between his two arms, raised him up, and, standing with his feet on the hind legs of the lion, throttled him. When the lion was dead, he took off his skin, and hung it round himself, putting the jaws of the lion on his head like a helmet, and knotting the skin of the fore-paws round his neck. His club had been broken when he struck the lion on the head, so strong were the bones of the animal ; he therefore hewed himself another club, and always went about with the club and the lion's skin.

[*Write from dictation the last sentence.*]

HERCULES SECOND LABOUR.

[*Spell and write*]

descended, poisonous, shattered, accomplished, according.

Hercules now returned, and sent word to the king that the lion was dead. Upon this Eurystheus was seized with a great dread of him, and had an underground chamber of bronze built for himself, into which he descended when Hercules came; and there was a grated opening in it, through which he spoke to Hercules, and commanded him to go and kill the hydra of Lerna. This hydra was a huge snake, as long as a ship; it had nine heads, and lived in the marsh of Lerna. Hercules mounted a chariot, which his friend Iolaus drove; and they took the road to Lerna.

The hydra crept into its den for fear of Hercules. He took his bow, wrapped tow, with pitch and brimstone, round the arrows, and when he had kindled them, shot them down into the cavern into which the monster had crawled. Upon this it rushed out of its den, and at Hercules. Hercules grasped it with one hand round the neck, just below where the nine heads branched out; but it twisted its long tail round one of his legs. He struck with his club among the heads, and split some of them; but whenever one head had been smashed, two others grew out in place of it. There came also an immense lobster, that took fast hold with his toes of the leg which the snake had wound itself around, and pinched it, and sorely hurt Hercules. This was a friend of the hydra, who wanted to help it; but Hercules trampled the lobster to pieces with his other foot. In the meantime, he was always dealing blows with his club upon the heads of the hydra, and new ones were always growing out, and

he would never have got done with it if his friend Iolaus had not been with him. Iolaus hewed trees down, and laid them together, and made a great fire; he then took large burning pieces, and whenever Hercules smashed one of the heads, he seared the place all over with the brands, and then no new heads grew out. When all the heads had been shattered in pieces, the hydra was dead, and Hercules dipped the tips of his arrows into its blood; which blood was so poisonous, that when one of the arrows dipped in it only so much as scratched the skin, then the man or the beast that had been wounded with such an arrow died. This was the Second Labour that Hercules had accomplished according to the orders of Eurystheus.

[*Write from dictation*]

Hercules accomplished his Second Labour according to the order of the king, who was so afraid of the brave hero, that he would speak to him only from an underground chamber.

THE THIRD AND FOURTH LABOURS OF HERCULES.

[*Spell and write*]

arrived, assembled, presented, perfume, entrance, carelessly, pursuing, expecting.

After that, Eurystheus ordered him to catch a famous stag which no man could catch, and bring it home alive. This stag had golden antlers, and ran so swiftly, that no horse or hound could overtake it. But Hercules was as swift as he was strong; he ran for a whole year in the track of the stag, till at length he caught it, and carried it on his shoulders to the king. This was the Third Labour.

The next demand of Eurystheus was, that he should

bring in the wild boar of Erymanthus alive. Erymanthus is a mountain in Arcadia; here lived this boar, and roamed about in all the cornfields and gardens, and laid them waste; and when the people went out against him with spears, he threw them down, and wounded them with his huge tusks, so that they died. Hercules went away to Erymanthus; but, on his road thither, he arrived one evening at a cavern, where the Centaur Pholus lived, and here he meant to sleep that night.

A great many centaurs lived thereabouts among the mountains; they had a big wine-cask, which they kept in the cavern of Pholus, and they drank the wine out of it only when they assembled in that cave, and had a feast. Pholus had no other wine but this; and when Hercules, after he had had something to eat, asked him for some wine, Pholus replied, that if he drew any out of the cask, the other centaurs would all come and kill him. Hercules said that that would perhaps not happen, and drew for himself a flagon of wine. Now, this was not wine such as we drink, for it was Bacchus who had presented it to the centaurs, and it had a smell like the finest roses, and this perfume was so strong, that when the wine was drawn out of the cask, it could be smelled as far as a man can see. It was not long till the centaurs smelt it, and at once they came running to kill Pholus. Some broke huge pieces of rock off, others tore pines and fir-trees out of the earth; for the centaurs used not to fight with swords and lances, and only a very few of them had bows and arrows. Hercules placed himself at the entrance of the cavern, and threw burning brands at the centaurs; then he bent his bow, and shot with the arrows—the tips of which had been dipped in the blood of the Lernaean hydra—and those whom he hit with them

died at once, just as if the hydra itself had bitten them. Then the rest fled. Pholus wondered that a little arrow could kill so large a creature as a centaur, and drew one of them out of the body of a centaur who was lying dead. As he was looking at it, he carelessly let it drop out of his hand; and the arrow fell upon his foot, and he died on the spot. Hercules had been pursuing the fleeing centaurs, and when he returned, he found poor Pholus dead. Then he was very sorry that he had opened the wine-cask against the wish of Pholus, and he burned his body, as the custom was, and buried his ashes and his bones.

After this, he went upon Mount Erymanthus, expecting that the boar would run out against him, as it had done to other hunters, and then he was going to seize it; but the boar was afraid of him, and ran away. Hercules ran after it, and the boar ran on and on, and in its terror jumped into a deep ravine, which was full of snow; for on the mountains of Arcadia lies deep snow, as on the Alps. Now, Hercules had made a running-noose upon a strong rope, and this he threw over the boar's legs and round its body as it lay sprawling and trying to get out; and then he drew it up to where he was standing. He threw the animal over his shoulder, and carried it to the king. The boar lay upon its back with its legs up, and grunted, and struck with its head and its legs; but it could not get loose. That was the Fourth Labour.

[*Write from dictation*]

When the hero arrived at the cavern, he drank of wine with so strong a perfume that his enemies assembled and came down to punish him. But he stood in the entrance of the cavern and drove them off, killing some with the poisoned arrows.

THE FIFTH LABOUR OF HERCULES.

[Spell and write]

commenced, ceiling, promised, cleansed, affirmed, punished.

Then Eurystheus commanded him to clean the stable of Augeas in one day. Augeas was king of Elis, and had three thousand head of cattle, which lived in a stable of immense size. It was a courtyard, and all round about it went a wall with vaulted chambers, and into these they drove the cattle at evening from the field. Now, the people of King Augeas were lazy, and allowed the dung to lie, till at length it had grown so high, that the cattle could no longer get into the stalls, and it would have taken a whole year's work to shovel it out, and cart it away. But Hercules dug a deep ditch up to the wall of the courtyard, and into this ditch he turned the water of two streams that came down with great force from the hills there; then he made a great hole in the wall, and at once the water rushed into the yard. And now he broke another hole in the wall on the other side, so that the water ran out again, and washed all the dung away; and the whole yard became as clean in one day as the street-pavement after a storm of wind and rain, although before, the dung would have reached as high as the ceiling of the room. Augeas had promised Hercules the tenth part of his cattle if he cleansed the stables for him in one day, as he affirmed that he could do; but he was a bad man, and did not keep his word; and he was punished for it after Hercules had finished all the labours that Eurystheus gave him to do; for Hercules then came

and made war upon him, and slew him. This was the Fifth Labour.

[*Write from dictation*]

Hercules commenced to cleanse the immense stables ; and long after, when he had finished the labours given him to do, he punished the bad king who had broken his promise.

THE SIXTH, SEVENTH, EIGHTH, AND NINTH LABOURS OF HERCULES.

[*Spell and write*]

ferocious, devoured, demanded, destroyed, altogether, composed, precious, proclamation, attacked, companions, victorious.

The Sixth Labour of Hercules was driving the fowls with iron beaks and claws out of the swamp of Stympalus. The Seventh, was bringing the mad bull from Crete.

Eurystheus next commanded him to bring the horses of King Diomedes from Thrace. Hercules went away in a ship, and came to Thrace. The horses were very ferocious, and ate men ; and King Diomedes was so wicked, that he caused the strangers who came to his country to be thrown to the horses, which then tore them to pieces, and devoured them as tigers and fierce wolves do. Diomedes refused to give up the horses when Hercules demanded them ; whereupon Hercules slew him, and gave him to his own horses to be devoured. He then carried the horses on board his ship, and took them away to the king ; but Eurystheus allowed them to run at large. When they came into the woods, the beasts of prey tore them in pieces ; and so these ferocious creatures were destroyed. That was the Eighth Labour.

The Amazons were a nation altogether composed of women, who rode upon horses, and waged war, and were as valiant as heroes. The name of their queen was Hippolyta; she had a precious girdle of gold set with jewels, that Mars had made her a present of. Eurystheus had heard of this girdle, and wanted to have it for his daughter, and he commanded Hercules to bring it. Hercules ordered proclamation to be made in Greece, that he was going to make war upon the Amazons, and that brave men might, if they chose, go along with him. He then went on board ship, and took along with him those who had come to him. When he arrived at the land of the Amazons, he sent to tell Queen Hippolyta for what purpose Eurystheus had sent him. Hippolyta knew that Hercules was obliged to obey Eurystheus, since Apollo had commanded him so to do; and she was willing to give him the girdle in a present, but the Amazons would not allow it, and attacked Hercules and his companions. Then a great battle was fought—the Amazons fighting on horseback, and Hercules and his comrades on foot; and if Hercules had not been there, the women would have been victorious. But Hercules put them to flight, and took Hippolyta prisoner; yet he did her no harm, but let her go free again, when he had received her girdle. He then turned homewards.

[Write from dictation]

The ferocious horses, which the king now demanded of the hero, destroyed men by tearing them to pieces, and then devoured them. The Amazons, over whom he and his companions were next victorious, were a nation composed altogether of women.

THE TENTH LABOUR OF HERCULES.

[Spell and write]

pastures, excellent, assembled, enemies, gathered, tormented,
neighbourhood.

Close to Spain lies an island, on which the great city of Cadiz now stands. On this island, there was in those days no city, but most beautiful pastures, with excellent grass, where the oxen of King Geryon pastured. These oxen were the finest that were to be seen anywhere, and were all of a red colour; the dog that watched them was called Orthus; it had two heads, and was so strong, that it could fight with two wolves at once, and destroy them. King Geryon was as if he had been made up of three huge giants grown together, and he had three heads, six arms, and six legs.

Hercules drove the oxen through Spain, and through Liguria, and the Ligurians all assembled together to take away the oxen from him, and they all shot arrows and threw stones at him. When they came near him, he killed them; but they shot and threw at him from a distance, and then Hercules could only use his arrows; and because there were so many of them, he shot his arrows all away; and they would at last have killed him, if his father Jupiter had not helped him. Jupiter caused it to rain stones, and these struck many of the Ligurians dead, and Hercules gathered the others up, and threw them at his enemies; and to this day, you may see this field, which is quite full of stones, in France. Then Hercules drove the oxen over the Alps, and made a way for them over the snow and ice, and then he came with them to the Tiber, where Rome now stands, but at that time there was no city there; and under Mount Aventine dwelt a fierce giant in a cavern, who was called Cacus. He breathed

fire out of his mouth and his nostrils, and tormented all the people sorely who dwelt in that neighbourhood. This giant came by night and stole some of the finest oxen, and dragged them into his cavern; and, in order that Hercules might not see by the footsteps that he had brought them thither, he drew them backwards by the tail, and then the footsteps looked as if oxen had come out of the cavern.

Hercules sought for the stolen oxen everywhere; and when he could find no trace of them, he proceeded on his journey with the rest. As he was driving them past the foot of Mount Aventine, one of the oxen of Hercules lowed; and when the stolen ones that were shut up in the cavern heard it, they answered. Cacus had blocked up the entrance with huge blocks of rock, these Hercules pulled down; and, as Cacus could not run away, he blew out fire against Hercules; but that did not make him afraid, and he slew Cacus.

When at last he was upon the isthmus, where the road is quite narrow, between steep mountains and the sea, another fierce giant set upon him. This giant threw a stone at Hercules, which was so heavy, that if it had lain upon a wagon, four-and-twenty horses could scarcely have drawn it. But Hercules was upon his guard, and warded off the stone with his club; and the stone lies till this day on the spot where it fell. On the following day, he reached the king, and the wicked Eurystheus got the beautiful oxen. That was the Tenth Labour, and a heavy piece of work it had been for Hercules.

[*Write from dictation*]

The oxen were assembled on the excellent pastures of the giant, but were driven away by the hero, who afterwards destroyed the giant Cacus, who tormented the whole neighbourhood.

THE DEATH OF HERCULES.

[*Spell and write*]

received, punishment, sacrifice, unluckily, funeral, descended, remembered, embraced, despised.

The Eleventh Labour put upon Hercules was to procure the golden apples of the Hesperides. The Twelfth Labour was to bring up from the lower regions the three-headed dog Cerberus. But we have not space to tell the story of these exploits here, and must leave them to be read elsewhere.

Hercules could easily have punished the bad Eurystheus for all the ill-treatment he had received; but he knew that the slavery he had borne was a punishment, and so he went away without doing the king any harm.

Some time after this, Hercules went to the foot of a mountain in Greece to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving for a victory he had gained. Now, as it was the custom for people, when they offered sacrifice, to adorn themselves with white and pure clothing; and as his clothes had become bloody and dirty, Hercules sent his servant to his home, to fetch clean and new clothes. Then, unluckily, Dejanira, his wife, who was angry with Hercules, put some poisoned blood upon a shirt which she sent by the hand of the servant to Hercules, who put it on. As soon as the shirt became warm on his body, it stuck to the skin, and the poison burned Hercules unbearably; he wanted to take it off, but it stuck fast, and the poison had already entered into his body, and Hercules felt that he would die of it. So he hewed down trees, and laid them one above another, and then laid himself on the top of the funeral pile, and begged his friends to kindle it. There

was a youth with him, named Philoctetes, the son of one of his friends. Hercules loved this youth much, and he was very obedient to him; Hercules presented to him his bow and arrows, and commanded him to kindle the funeral pile; and the youth obeyed, although it made him very sorry. But with this, all the sufferings and hardships of Hercules were at an end; for, when the funeral pile began to burn, there came a sudden storm, and a cloud descended upon the funeral pile, amid thunder and lightning, and in this cloud the soul of Hercules was taken up and borne to Olympus, while his body burned away. When his soul came to Olympus, Jupiter changed him into a god; and Jupiter and all the gods, who had always loved him, greeted him and embraced him. Even Juno, who had been all along an enemy of his, became reconciled to him, and gave him her beautiful daughter Hebe to wife. And in all the countries where Hercules had done any good deed, in extirpating tyrants or evil beasts, people remembered him in all future time with gratitude, and spoke of him with reverence. Many thousand years have gone by since then, and still people hold Hercules in honour and renown; but the bad Eurystheus is hated and despised.

Thus end the fables which are told of the mighty Hercules.

[Write from dictation]

He received the poisoned shirt when he was going to offer up a sacrifice, and, unluckily, it led to his death. After his death, he was remembered with gratitude, and spoken of with reverence, and held in honour, while the bad king was despised.

THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SQUIRREL.

A Fable.

The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel,
And the former called the latter 'Little prig.'
Bun replied :
' You are doubtless very big,
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together
To make up a year,
And a sphere :
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I am not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry :
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track.
Talents differ ; all is well and wisely put ;
If *I* cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can *you* crack a nut.'

AN ADVENTURE WITH ROBBERS.

[Spell and write]

comfortless, frequented, certainly, opposite, traveller, emptied.

A traveller in Mexico, whose name was Taylor, started one morning at sunrise from the cold, comfortless inn where he had slept the night before. A few hours' riding brought him to a small town, where he was glad to

rest himself, and breakfast. When mounting his horse again, he was asked whether he would not have a guard, as the road he was going was much frequented by robbers; but he refused, either because he was too brave to care for one, or because he thought it was a mere pretence to make him pay for an escort. He rode off, the innkeeper telling him he would certainly be stopped on the road.

All that day passed—he was travelling a very lonely road—but no robbers appeared. He thought how wise he had been to refuse a guard. The inn he reached at night was a very bad one—so bad that he could not easily obtain food in it. He started the next morning without breakfast, and rode till he came to a wretched little hut, built of mud. He took what he could find for himself and his horse, and gave the woman a dollar to pay for it; she had no change, and went to a shop opposite to ask for it. Soon she came back, telling him the people in the shop said it was a bad one. He gave her a second, and she came back with the same story. The traveller began to think something was wrong; but he gave her a third, and told her that must do, for he would not give her any more. There were a number of dirty fellows drinking spirits in the shop, and one of them asked Mr Taylor to take a drop; but he refused. The man said something about its being 'the last time,' but the traveller did not heed his remark.

He travelled on for some time; not a creature was to be seen on the road, which lay between two steep hills. So lonely was it, that he thought it would be well to load his pistol. Before he could do this, however, he heard a slight movement in the brushwood by his side. Turning to see what caused it, a double-barrelled musket

met his view, pointed at him, so close and so well-aimed that he could almost look down the barrels. Holding the musket was a fierce-looking man in a pink shirt and white trousers. In a moment, a second was visible on the other side, then a third in front. The attack was so sudden, that he could only throw down his arms as they bade him. The next command was that he should get off his horse; this, too, he did, for, with one unloaded pistol, how could he fight the robbers? They made him lead his horse out of the road, for fear of any passers-by. One of them went back to keep guard. The others, pointing their muskets at their victim, ordered him to lie down on his face. They then took off his coat and waistcoat, and turned his pockets inside out. His purse had very little money in it, at which they were angry. He had been so prudent as only to take enough for his journey, but he had a check on a bank in Mexico. The robbers gave him back his papers, and this check among them.

They next tied his hands behind him; then spreading out a blanket he carried, emptied his bags into it, that they might choose what to take. They took all but letters, books, and papers. They also picked his pockets of some oranges and cigars, but gave him back one of each, saying: 'Perhaps you may get hungry before night.' They tied all they took up in a blanket, and carried it off, leaving him his horse, fortunately. They then departed, bidding him good-day, and saying how pleased they were to have met with him. He, poor fellow, with his hands tied behind him, felt it anything but pleasant. The first thing was to get rid of the rope; and, after twisting and turning a long time, he contrived to turn his hands round so that he could reach the knots with his teeth—in half

an hour he was free once more. His horse had remained near him. He caught him, mounted, and rode off, seeing as he did so, the three robbers still in the distance. The man in the pink shirt was one of the men he had seen drinking in the shop, and now he knew that calling the dollar a bad one was a trick to see how much he had about him. He galloped on as hard as he could, and reached a town where a good old priest directed him to an honest inn. As he jumped off his poor tired horse, he told the people of the inn he had no money. But they kindly bade him not to mind it; he might stay as long as he liked. They told him, too, that he ought to be very thankful the robbers had not taken his life as well as his money and goods.

[*Write from dictation*]

The traveller left the comfortless inn, to journey over a road frequented by robbers, and refused an escort. He was met by the way, and his pockets emptied of their contents.

LUCY GRAY ; OR, SOLITUDE.

1.

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray :
And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

2.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew ;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door !

3.

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green ;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

4.

‘To-night will be a stormy night—
You to the town must go ;
And take a lantern, child, to light
Your mother through the snow.’

5.

‘That, father, will I gladly do !
’Tis scarcely afternoon—
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon !’

6.

At this the father raised his hook,
And snapped a fagot-band ;
He plied his work ; and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

7.

Not blither is the mountain roe :
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

8.

The storm came on before its time :
She wandered up and down ;
And many a hill did Lucy climb ;
But never reached the town.

9.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide ;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

10.

At daybreak, on a hill they stood
That overlooked the moor ;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

11.

They wept, and, turning homeward, cried :
‘ In heaven we all shall meet ! ’
When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy’s feet.

12.

Then downward from the steep hill’s edge
They tracked the footmarks small ;
And through the broken hawthorn-hedge,
And by the long stone wall ;

13.

And then an open field they crossed ;
The marks were still the same ;
They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;
And to the bridge they came.

14.

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank ;
And further there were none !

15.

Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child ;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

16.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind ;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

THE WASP AND BEE.

A Fable.

A wasp met a bee, and said to him : ' Pray, can you tell me what is the reason that men are so ill-natured to me, while they are so fond of you ? We are both very much alike, only that the broad golden rings about my body make me much handsomer than you are : we are both winged insects, we both love honey, and we both sting people when we are angry, yet men always hate me and try to kill me, though I am much more familiar with them than you are, and pay them visits in their houses, and at their tea-table, and at all their meals ; while you are very shy, and hardly ever come near them ; yet they build you curious houses, thatched with straw, and take care of and feed you in the winter very often. I wonder what is the reason ?'

The bee said : ' Because you never do them any good, but, on the contrary, are very troublesome and mischievous ; therefore they do not like to see you, but they know that I am busy all day long in making them honey. You had better pay them fewer visits, and try to be useful.'



THE LION-KILLER.

[*Spell and write*]

attack, amuses, arrival, colony, amazed, molesting, neighbourhood,
complaints, scented, tremendous.

The lion found in North Africa is a very savage beast. In some parts of the world, lions will turn away when they meet a man, and unless he touches them, will not attack him. But it is not so with the lions of North Africa—they devour both men and cattle whenever they can find them. Sometimes they leap at the head of their victim, and kill him at once. At other times, they

amuse themselves with their prey, as a cat amuses herself with a mouse. They walk a little way off, and then spring on him again, pat him and tumble him over, killing him at last, when they are tired and the poor victim is half dead with fear. These lions eat so many cattle, that a brave French soldier tells us one lion, in the course of his life, will devour as much food as would cost £8000. No wonder the people who live there both hate and fear lions very much.

The French soldier whom we have referred to has killed so many lions, that he well deserves his name of the 'Lion-killer.' On the first evening of his arrival at the camp in the French colony of Algeria, he heard sad complaints of a lion that had been devouring the flocks and herds. After listening to the account of all that this dreadful beast had done and was doing, the brave little Frenchman amazed them by saying very quietly, that he would go and kill him, if they would find him a guide. They all made fun of him on hearing this—telling him if the lion did not eat him, it would only be because he was so small. But this did not turn the brave hunter from his purpose; so at last they agreed to help him. They dug a large hole in the ground, and covered it with trees. On these trees they placed large stones, and then covered the whole with damp earth. In this hole the Lion-killer was to stand and watch for the lion, who would most likely, as his friends told him, drag him out of it and devour him. Night after night he spent there, but did not find it a very pleasant post, and the lion never came near. At length, however, one night he heard the fierce monster's roar. For two hours he remained in the neighbourhood, and then went off without molesting the hunter. On

following his traces, it was found that he passed through the open plain, and the Lion-killer resolved to watch for him there.

To the plain he went, attended by a dozen Arabs. They found a fine cluster of trees, standing as thickly together as if they had but one root. Some of the Arabs ran away from fright; the rest, with the Lion-killer, concealed themselves among the thick trees. There were many traces of the lion; but the lion himself they could not see.

Going back to the camp, fresh complaints of the lion's doings were made. He seemed to be everywhere at once, and yet when they looked for him he was nowhere. At last, after many vain attempts to find him, one night as they watched, his roar was again heard. When it died away, the Lion-killer, with his two friends, placed themselves in a small opening in the wood. Soon the crackling of boughs was heard as the beast strode towards them. Nearer he came, and his hidden foes raised their guns ready to shoot at him. At last, a bush close to the hunters was stirred by his movement. A few growls were heard, and then came a roar that in the night's darkness made even the brave hunter's heart quake. The lion most likely scented the men, for he raised his huge head above the bushes, and fixed his eye on the Lion-killer, who seized that moment before he could leap on him to shoot him through the side of the head. Another tremendous roar shook the wood—then the smoke cleared away, and the lion lay dead. It was well for the hunters that one shot had been enough, for this lion was so large that the three men together could not turn him over, and one man alone could scarcely raise his huge head from the ground.

It was for killing this fierce creature, that the grateful Arabs gave the brave little soldier the name of the Lion-killer.

[*Spell and write*]

For some time the lion did not molest the hunter. Fresh complaints of his attacks were heard on every side. At last, the lion came suddenly upon the hunter, who, at one shot, killed the savage beast. The hunter's courage amazed all the people of the neighbourhood.

THE FARM-YARD.

1.

Lo ! the sun is o'er the hill-top,
Lo ! the morning breaketh clear ;
Merry sounds of mirth and labour,
Waken in the farm-yard near.

2.

There the cock sits on the barn-door,
Crowing merrily and loud ;
While his crimson feathers glitter,
As he shakes his pinions proud.

3.

And the brown hen walks below him,
Picking grains up from the floor ;
Bring the fresh egg, bring it quickly,
From her nest behind the door.

4.

There the thresher bids good-morrow,
Leaning on his ready flail,
To the milkmaid, as she cometh,
Poising on her head the pail.

5.

By the dun cow, meek and quiet,
She has set her stool so low,
And she sings a gentle measure,
As she makes the white milk flow ;

6.

Which the sweetly-breathing creatures,
Standing patient, love to hear—
Never lift the foot in anger,
Never shrink aside in fear.

7.

With his spade across his shoulder,
To the field the workman goes ;
While the watch-dog, *his* work over,
Seeks the hay-loft for repose.

8.

There, I see the horses harnessed,
Waiting by the empty cart ;
All are cheerful, all are ready,
And a thought thrills through my heart :

9.

'Tis the idle that grow weary—
Gaily rings each busy sound ;
'Tis a pleasure to be active ;
There's a joy in labour found.

10.

And I feel my blood run freer,
And I own it kind, and good,
That to man the law was given :
He must work to win his food.



LITTLE BY LITTLE.

[*Spell and write*]*

It was on a bright May morning that a little fern pushed her head through the ground, ready to begin unrolling it; but first, as became a wise fern, she looked round her. No trees, no grass, no leaves—nothing but bare stony ground, without a handful of soil. A large and jagged stone, which had rolled down from the hill-top above, lay beside her, round one side of which she could just see the distant wood from which she had been blown last autumn. ‘This is not pleasant,’ said the fern; ‘this is very different from last year, when I was only a seed, and lived on my mother’s back in a shady wood. I don’t think I can do any good here, one poor little fern, beside a great stone that looks as if it were going to fall down and crush me.’

Just then, a gleam of sunshine came out and warmed the heart of the little fern. ‘Well, well,’ she said, ‘it

*This lesson contains words so easy, as to render a separate spelling lesson superfluous.

is better to be brave; I will do my best. We may look better soon, "little by little," my mother always said; and one by one she unfolded her beautiful leaves, and hung them out—long green plumes they were, and they rested against the stone, and made it look quite handsome. The stone, too, was kind to the little fern; it kept it cool and shady, and sheltered it from the wind, and they were soon good friends.

Not very far from the stone, but quite out of sight, a stream of water ran down the hill—a clear, bright spring, that was pleasant to look upon. One day there was a heavy storm; the thunder rolled, and the rain fell, and the fern was glad enough of the friendly stone that saved her from being carried away. The brook was so swollen by the rain, that it was forced out of its old track, and came leaping down over the large stone close to the fern. 'This is terrible,' said the fern; 'I shall certainly be washed away.'

'Do not fear, little friend,' said the stream, 'I will not hurt you; the ground is not so steep here, and I love to rest my waters a little before starting off again into the valley below. See how my drops sparkle, and how well I water the ground for you!'

That was true, indeed, and when the fern was used to the sound, she no longer feared.

'I wish you would always come my way,' said the stone; 'you wash me so clean, and make me cool.'

'I will, very gladly,' said the water, 'for I had no such fine big stone to leap round on my old road, and there was not a single fern on my banks.'

Any child may see that a stream likes leaping over stones: then it is that its merry song begins—it does not hurry on fast and silent, as it did before; but it

murmurs softly, and tosses up little bubbles of spray, and all because of the stones and pebbles.

So the little water fell splashing over the stone, and then ran away down to the valley, where it found a large river. It plunged into the river, and flowed away to the sea.

Thus it is that the rivers are made ; many little springs run down from the high hills, and mingle together. On and on they go, and still more springs come, and the rivers grow larger and larger. They have many fish in their waters—bright, gleaming fish. They have gay flies dancing over them, and birds building in the rushes on their banks. Where the water flows, there the grass is greenest, and flowers the brightest. The tall trees bend down over them, and dip their leaves in as they run by. The cows that feed in the meadows come there to drink, and to cool themselves when the sun is hot. But the rivers do not wait, they run on, broader and broader, to the sea. Then men make boats and ships, and the waters float them down. They build large towns, too, beside the rivers, because these rivers are roads for them when they want to go to lands that are far away. Then they give names to the rivers, and they build high bridges across them ; but the waters do not stay—they run on and on till they reach the blue salt sea. All this the stream told to the fern when she asked why it ran on both day and night. The fern liked to hear it, but she did not wish to go to the sea. She liked best to live beside the rock.

And now the stream grew very quiet once more, and its waters did not spread so wide ; but it had found so pleasant a channel round the big gray stone, that it did not leave it, but liked it better than its old one. It had hollowed out, too, a little pool for itself beside the stone where the water lay calm and clear, and where the fern

could see reflected her own waving leaves, and could see the blue sky, too, with its white sailing clouds; and at night, when the stars came out, she saw them in her quiet pool twinkling as bright as in the heaven above.

Round where the water had been there was a thin cake of dust like powdered rock, which the stream had washed down from the hill above. The fern liked this because it smelled a little like the soil which used to be so fragrant in the early morning, when she was a seed in the forest in the distance. Soon the birds saw the little pool, and came there to drink. Then they sang their little song of thanks, and flew away again; but from time to time they dropped the seeds they had picked up in the new soil which the waters had spread. One day it was an acorn from the large oak-wood. Another day it was a beech-nut, and so on. The stream of water washed down more good soil off the hills when the clouds poured out their rains, and made it swell and overflow, and with these it covered up the acorn and the beech-nut. Seeds, too, were wafted by the wind to this gray spot—soft, downy seeds like those of the thistle. The fern saw them all, but she did not know what they meant, though her own seed had fallen off all round her. No one knew, and no one could have guessed what was to come, when in winter the deep snow lay there—so deep, that only the top of the rock could be seen, while the water was all turned to icicles, and hung there hard, and bright, and still.

But there came a warm day that melted the snow, and it rushed from above in a strong torrent. It brought stones with it, but they were stayed by the rock that sheltered the fern, for that was larger than any of them. The stream was singing loudly to waken the fern from its

winter sleep. It woke up at last, and found its old, gray friend, the stone, with a patch of green moss on it here and there. All around, too, were green stems growing up. Here the oak, and there the beech. All that spring and summer, wild-flowers came out too, and young ferns in great numbers. Nor was it *now* the birds only that flew to the spring, but the butterflies and the bees also; and the more they came, the more seeds there were, and the more hope of flowers for next year. All the summer through the fern heard sweet sounds, and had sweet air round her. 'What a pleasant home is this!' she said every morning when the sun rose; 'and last year it was so bare and cold.' 'Little by little,' said the stream—'little by little, so we grow and fill the earth;' and away it went tumbling over the stones to get to the sea.

And so the years went by, and the rock was gray and mossy, and the stones above were gray and mossy, and only the stream was as young as ever; but now the fern and the rock were in the midst of a thick, pleasant shade, for the beech and the oak had grown up, and had planted their children round them. All the ground round about was green with mosses, and ferns, and wild-flowers. The birds built their nests in the trees, and the little insects lived there, and the noble stags came down from the hills, and drank at the cool, deep pool beside which the fern grew. The soil was not stony now. It was covered deep with rich mould—the droppings of the trees for many years. The stream, every year when it was swollen by rain or snow, took some of the soil into the valley; and the valley grew rich, too. Men came there to live—they made cornfields and gardens; for they said: 'The soil is very fine; we shall have good crops.' The corn grew there thick and golden, and the miller came and built

his mill, that he might grind it. He built it close to the little stream, and so the stream turned his mill and ground the corn. All the little children had nice cakes and loaves when the corn was ground, and there was plenty for every one; but the little stream did not stay—it ran on faster than before to reach the blue salt sea.

One day there came a man to the hillside, and he heard the little stream as it ran singing down the hill. Then he walked on till he came to the place where it leaped over the stones and past the waving green ferns. He sat down near it, and he put it all in a picture. He painted the mossy old rock, and the stream, and the quiet pool. He painted the ferns, and the grand old oak, and the wide-spreading beech. He painted the flowers, too, and the moss upon the ground. In his picture you saw them all; the leaves made shadows, and the sunshine stole in between them. It shone on the water, and on one side of the gray rock. It just kissed the fern leaves; but the flowers and the moss looked all sunshine; and when he had done, he carried it away to a town a long way off, and every one who looked at it loved the merry spring, and the gray rock, and the green ferns. And every one came who could. Pale little children, who had lived in crowded streets all their short lives without ever seeing the country; and poor cripples, who could not get so far; and busy people, who had not time to go; and poor people, who had not money enough: they all looked at the picture, and it seemed as if they saw it all in reality, and as if they felt the sweet country air on their cheeks.

But the little spring did not stay, although it was put in a picture; it is running now as fast as ever down the

valley and into the river, and on, on to the blue salt sea.*



BIG AND LITTLE.

[*Spell and write*]

cucumber, patient, shrivelled, niggardly, vinegar.

Once on a time, the cucumber and the acorn went to Wishing Gate.

At Wishing Gate, perhaps you know, you can have your wish, whatever it may be; but I think you had better be careful before you ask for it. Now, the

* The sentiment of the above lesson being more difficult than that of others, the language has been made easier. It is intended that a considerable portion of it should be written out from dictation, as it forms an excellent revisal exercise in monosyllables and dissyllables.

cucumber wished to grow big at once; but the acorn was not in such a hurry, but was content to wait, if only he might grow into a large tree some day.

Of course, they had their wishes, and so the cucumber grew big at once. He lay sprawling all over the garden, and hardly left room for anything else to grow; while the acorn grew slowly, just shewing two or three leaves, to the joy of the cucumber, who said that it served him right. But the acorn did not mind; he was very patient, only sometimes a little weary of waiting so long, and he bided his time without saying a word.

The cucumber, after filling the garden with his great leaves, and saying rude and sancy words to all the young plants round about, was laid hold of, of a sudden, by Jack Frost, who was getting rather tired of his airs and graces, and shrivelled him up in one morning. So the cucumber withered away. But when the patient acorn had waited many, many years, he grew into a fine stout old oak. He spread out his broad leafy hands over the old men and women, whom he had known when he and they were young. He seemed to be giving them his blessing; nor was he niggardly of it either, for he gave it not only to the grandsires, but to their children, and their children's children. Who wouldn't wish to be an oak?

Why, when they cut up the cucumber, it only made Jammy very ill. He ate it for his supper, with pepper and vinegar, and they had to send for the doctor to him next day; but when, after ages and ages, they cut up the good old oak, it was to build a big ship, that Jacky might be captain of it, and sail all over the sea.

'I'll be an oak,' said Charley, 'if I wait ever so long.

But do you know, grandfather, where that Wishing Gate
is to be found ?

[*Write from dictation*]

The cucumber, impatient and saucy, was shrivelled up after a
very short triumph; the acorn, patient and modest, lived to spread
its broad shadow over many generations of men.

THE FRIAR OF ORDERS GRAY.

1.

It was a friar of orders gray,
Walked forth to tell his beads;
And he met with a lady fair,
Clad in a pilgrim's weeds.*

2.

'Now, Heaven thee save, thou reverend friar!
I pray thee tell to me,
If ever at yon holy shrine
My true love thou didst see.'

3.

'And how should I your true love know
From many another one ?'
'Oh ! by his cockle hat† and staff,
And by his sandal shoon.

4.

'But chiefly by his face and mien,
That were so fair to view;
His flaxen locks that sweetly curled,
And eyne‡ of lovely blue.'

* Garments.

† A hat set round with cockle shells, to signify that the wearer
had been beyond the seas.

‡ Eyes.

5.

'Oh! lady, he is dead and gone!
Lady, he's dead and gone!
And at his head a green-grass turf,
And at his heels a stone.

6.

'Within these holy cloisters long,
He languished, and he died,
Lamenting for a lady's love,
And 'plaining of her pride.

7.

'Here bore him bare-faced on his bier
Six proper youths and tall;
And many a tear bedewed his grave
Within the kirk-yard wall.'

8.

'And art thou dead, thou gentle youth?
And art thou dead and gone?
And didst thou die for love of me?
Break, cruel heart of stone!'

9.

'Oh! weep not, lady, weep not so;
Some ghostly comfort seek:
Let not vain sorrow rive thy heart,
Nor tears bedew thy cheek.'

10.

'Oh! do not, do not, holy friar,
My sorrow now reprove;
For I have lost the sweetest youth
That e'er won lady's love.

11.

‘And now, alas ! for thy sad loss
I’ll ever weep and sigh ;
For thee I only wished to live,
For thee I wished to die.’

12.

‘Weep no more, lady, weep no more,
Thy sorrow is in vain :
For, violets plucked the sweetest showers
Will ne’er make grow again.

13.

‘Our joys as winged dreams do fly ;
Why, then, should sorrow last ?
Since grief but aggravates thy loss,
Grieve not for what is past.’

14.

‘Oh ! say not so, thou holy friar ;
I pray thee, say not so ;
For since my true love died for me,
’Tis meet my tears should flow.

15.

‘And will he never come again ?
Will he ne’er come again ?
‘Ah ! no, he is dead, and laid in his grave,
For ever to remain.’

16.

‘His cheek was redder than the rose,
The comeliest youth was he :
But he is dead, and laid in his grave,
Alas ! and woe is me.’

17.

'Sigh no more, lady, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever ;
One foot on sea, and one on land,
To one thing constant never.

18.

'Hadst thou been fond, he had been false,
And left thee sad and heavy :
For young men e'er were fickle found,
Since summer trees were leafy.'

19.

Now, say not so, thou holy friar ;
I pray thee, say not so ;
My love he had the truest heart—
Oh ! he was ever true !

20.

'And art thou dead, thou much-loved youth ;
And didst thou die for me ?
Then farewell, home ! far evermore
A pilgrim I will be.

21.

'But first upon my true love's grave
My weary limbs I'll lay,
And thrice I'll kiss the green-grass turf
That wraps his breathless clay.'

22.

'Yet stay, fair lady, stay awhile
Beneath yon cloister wall :
The cold wind through the hawthorn blows,
And drizzly rain doth fall.'

23.

'Oh! stay me not, thou holy friar;
Oh! stay me not, I pray:
No drizzly rain that falls on me
Can wash my fault away.'

24.

'Yet stay, fair lady, turn again,
And dry those pearly tears;
For see, beneath this gown of gray
Thy own true love appears.

25.

'Here, forced by grief and hopeless love,
These holy weeds I sought;
And here, amidst these lonely walls,
To end my days I thought.

26.

'But, happily, my year of grace*
Is not yet passed away;
If I still might hope to win thy love,
No longer would I stay.'

27.

'Now grief, farewell! and welcome joy,
Once more unto my heart;
For since I've found thee, lovely youth,
We never more will part.'

* That is, the year of trial was not over: he had not yet taken the vows.

THE MIRACULOUS PITCHER.

[Spell and write]

hospitality, neighbours, diligently, vegetables, bountifully, cheerfully, sorrowfully, extremity, eminence, travellers, imitate, comfortable, bespattered.

One evening, in times long ago, old Philemon, and his old wife Baucis sat at their cottage door, enjoying the calm and beautiful sunset. They had already eaten their frugal supper, and intended now to spend a quiet hour or two before bed-time. So they talked together about their garden, and their corn, and their bees, and their grape-vine, which clambered over the cottage wall, and on which the grapes were beginning to turn purple. But the rude shouts of children, and the fierce barking of dogs, in the village near at hand, grew louder and louder, until at last it was hardly possible for Baucis and Philemon to hear each other speak.

‘Ah, wife!’ cried Philemon, ‘I fear some poor traveller is seeking hospitality among our neighbours yonder, and instead of giving him food and lodging, they have set their dogs at him, as their custom is!’

‘Well-a-day!’ answered old Baucis, ‘I do wish our neighbours felt a little more kindness for their fellow-creatures. And only think of bringing up their children in this naughty way, and patting them on the head when they fling stones at strangers!’

‘These children will never come to any good,’ said Philemon, shaking his white head. ‘To tell you the truth, wife, I should not wonder if some terrible thing were to happen to all the people in the village, unless they mend their manners. But, as for you and me, so

long as Providence affords us a crust of bread, let us be ready to give half to any poor homeless stranger that may come along and need it.'

'That's right, husband,' said Baucis; 'so we will!'

These old folks, you must know, were quite poor, and had to work pretty hard for their living. Old Philemon toiled diligently in his garden, while Baucis was always busy with her distaff, or making a little butter and cheese with the cow's milk, or doing one thing and another about the cottage. Their food was seldom anything but bread, milk, and vegetables, with sometimes a portion of honey from their hive; and now and then a bunch of grapes, that had ripened against the cottage wall. But they were two of the kindest old people in the world, and would cheerfully have gone without their dinners any day, rather than refuse a slice of their brown loaf, a cup of new milk, and a spoonful of honey, to the weary traveller who might pause before their door; they felt as if such guests were sacred, and that they ought, therefore, to treat them better and more bountifully than their own selves.

So now you can understand why old Philemon spoke so sorrowfully when he heard the shouts of the children, and barking of the dogs, at the further extremity of the village street. There was a confused din which lasted a good while, and seemed to pass quite through the breadth of the valley.

'I never heard the dogs so loud!' observed the good old man.

'Nor the children so rude!' answered his good old wife.

They sat shaking their heads, one at another, while the noise came nearer and nearer; until at the foot of the little eminence on which their cottage stood, they saw two travellers approaching on foot. Close behind them came

the fierce dogs, snarling at their very heels. A little further off ran a crowd of children, who sent up shrill cries and flung stones at the two strangers with all their might. Once or twice the younger of the two men (he was a slender and very active figure) turned about, and drove back the dogs with a staff which he carried in his hand. His companion, who was a very tall person, walked calmly along, as if disdaining to notice either the naughty children, or the pack of curs whose manners the children seemed to imitate.

Both of the travellers were very humbly clad, and looked as if they might not have money enough in their pockets to pay for a night's lodging. And this, I am afraid, was the reason why the villagers had allowed their children and dogs to treat them so rudely.

'Come, wife,' said Philemon to Baucis, 'let us go and meet these poor people. No doubt they feel almost too heavy-hearted to climb the hill.'

'Go you and meet them,' answered Baucis, 'while I make haste within doors, and see whether we can get them anything for supper; a comfortable bowl of bread and milk would do wonders towards raising their spirits.'

Accordingly she hastened into the cottage. Philemon on his part went forward and extended his hand with so hospitable an aspect, that there was no need of saying; what nevertheless he did say in the heartiest tone—'Welcome, strangers! welcome!'

'Thank you,' replied the younger of the two, in a lively kind of a way, notwithstanding his weariness and trouble. 'This is quite another greeting from that we met with yonder in the village. Pray, why do you live in such a bad neighbourhood?'

'Ah!' observed old Philemon, with a quiet kindly

smile: 'Providence put me here, I hope, among other reasons, in order that I may make you what amends I can for the inhospitality of my neighbours.'

'Well said, old father!' cried the traveller, laughing; 'and if the truth must be told, my companion and myself need some amends. Those children—the little rascals!—have bespattered us finely with their mud-balls; and one of the curs has torn my cloak, which was already ragged enough. But I took him across the muzzle with my staff, and I think you may have heard him yelp, even thus far off.'

[*Write from dictation*]

From an eminence they saw the travellers at the extremity of the village, and welcomed them hospitably and cheerfully, sorrowful that they had been badly treated by their neighbours. The two strangers were all bespattered with mud.

THE MIRACULOUS PITCHER—*continued.*

[*Spell and write*]

remarkably, ancient, affections, ordinary, disguise, character, pleasantly, countenance, expression, apologies, circumstances, appetite, excellent, delightful.

By this time Philemon and his two guests had reached the cottage door. 'Friends,' said the old man, 'sit down and rest yourselves here on this bench. My good wife, Baucis, has gone to see what you can have for supper. We are poor folks; but you shall be welcome to whatever we have in the cupboard.'

'Was there not,' asked the stranger, in a remarkably deep tone of voice, 'a lake in very ancient times, covering the spot where now stands yonder village?'

'Not in my day, friend,' answered Philemon; 'and yet

I am an old man, as you see. There were always the fields and meadows just as they are now, and the old trees, and the little stream murmuring through the midst of the valley. My father, or his father before him, never saw it otherwise, so far as I know; and doubtless it will still be the same, when old Philemon shall be gone and forgotten.'

'That is more than can be safely foretold,' observed the stranger; and there was something very stern in his deep voice. He shook his head, too, so that his dark and heavy curls were shaken with the movement: 'Since the inhabitants of yonder village have forgotten the affections of their nature, it were better that the lake should be rippling over their dwellings again.'

The traveller looked so stern, that Philemon was really almost frightened; the more so, that at his frown the twilight seemed suddenly to grow darker, and that, when he shook his head, there was a roll as of thunder in the air.

But in a moment afterwards the stranger's face became so kindly and mild, that the old man quite forgot his terror. Nevertheless, he could not help feeling that this elder traveller must be no ordinary person, although he happened now to be attired so humbly, and to be journeying on foot. Not that Philemon fancied him a prince in disguise, or any character of that sort; but rather some exceedingly wise man who went about the world in this poor garb, despising wealth and all worldly objects, and seeking everywhere to add a mite to his wisdom. This idea appeared the more probable, because when Philemon raised his eyes to the stranger's face, he seemed to see more thought there in one look, than he could have studied out in a lifetime.

While Baucis was getting the supper, the travellers both began to talk very pleasantly with Philemon. But Philemon, simple and kind-hearted old man as he was, had not many secrets to disclose. He talked, however, about the events of his past life, in the whole course of which he had never been a score of miles from this very spot. His wife Baucis and himself had dwelt in the cottage from their youth upward, earning their bread by honest labour, always poor, but still contented. He told what excellent butter and cheese Baucis had made, and how nice were the vegetables he raised in his garden. He said, too, that because they loved one another so very much, it was the wish of both that death might not separate them, but that they should die, as they had lived, together.

As the stranger listened, a smile beamed over his countenance, and made its expression as sweet as it was grand. ‘You are a good old man,’ said he to Philemon, ‘and you have a good old wife to be your help-meet. It is fit that your wish be granted.’

And it seemed to Philemon just then, as if the sunset clouds threw up a bright flash from the west, and kindled a sudden light in the sky.

Baucis had now got supper ready, and coming to the door, began to make apologies for the poor fare she was forced to set before her guests.

‘Had we known you were coming,’ said she, ‘my good man and myself would have gone without a morsel, rather than you should lack a better supper. But I took the most part of to-day’s milk to make cheese; and our last loaf is already half eaten. Ah me! I never feel the sorrow of being poor, save when a poor traveller knocks at our door.’

As Baucis had said, there was but a scanty supper for two hungry travellers. In the middle of the table was the remnant of a brown loaf, with a piece of cheese on one side of it, and a dish of honeycomb on the other. There was besides a pretty good bunch of grapes for each of the guests. A moderately sized earthen pitcher, nearly full of milk, stood at a corner of the board; and when Baucis had filled the bowls, and set them before the strangers, only a little milk remained in the bottom of the pitcher. Alas! it is a very sad business when a bountiful heart finds itself pinched and squeezed by narrow circumstances. Poor Baucis kept wishing that she might starve for a week to come, if it were possible by so doing to provide for these hungry folks a more plentiful supper.

And since the supper was so exceedingly small, she could not help wishing that their appetites had not been quite so large. Why, at their very first sitting down, the two travellers both drank off all the milk in their two bowls at a draught.

‘A little more milk, kind mother Baucis, if you please,’ said the younger traveller, whose name was Quicksilver. ‘The day has been hot, and I am very much athirst.’

‘Now my dear people,’ answered Baucis, in great confusion, ‘I am so sorry and ashamed. But the truth is, there is hardly a drop more milk in the pitcher. O husband! husband! why didn’t we go without our supper?’

‘Why, it appears to me,’ cried Quicksilver, starting up from table and taking the pitcher by the handle; ‘it really appears to me that matters are not quite so bad as you think them. Here is certainly more milk in the pitcher.’ So saying, and to the vast astonishment of Baucis, he proceeded not only to fill his own bowl, but his companion’s likewise, from the pitcher that was

supposed to be almost empty.' The good woman could scarcely believe her eyes. She had certainly poured out nearly all the milk, and had peeped in afterwards and seen the bottom of the pitcher as she set it down on the table.

'But I am old,' thought Baucis to herself, 'and apt to be forgetful. I suppose I must have made a mistake. At all events, the pitcher cannot help being empty now, after filling the bowls twice over.'

'What excellent milk!' observed Quicksilver, after quaffing the contents of the second bowl. 'Excuse me, my kind hostess, but I must really ask you for a little more.'

Now, Baucis had seen, as plainly as she could see anything, that Quicksilver had turned the pitcher upside down, and had poured out every drop of milk in filling the last bowl. Of course, there could not possibly be any left. However, in order to let him know precisely how the case was, she lifted the pitcher, and made a gesture as if pouring milk into Quicksilver's bowl, but without the remotest idea that any milk would stream forth. What was her surprise, therefore, when such an abundant supply fell bubbling into the bowl, that it was immediately filled to the brim, and overflowed upon the table!

'And now a slice of your brown loaf, Mother Baucis,' said Quicksilver, 'and a little of that honey!'

Baucis cut him a slice, accordingly; and though the loaf, when she and her husband ate of it, had been rather too dry and crusty to be palatable, it was now as light and moist as if but a few hours out of the oven. Tasting a crumb which had fallen on the table, she found it more delicious than bread ever was before, and could hardly

believe that it was a loaf of her own kneading and baking. Yet, what other loaf could it possibly be?

But oh, the honey! Never was such honey tasted, seen, or smelt. The perfume floated around the kitchen, and made it so delightful, that, had you closed your eyes, you would instantly have forgotten the low ceiling and smoky walls, and have fancied yourself in an arbour, with honeysuckles creeping over it.

[*Write from dictation*]

Human affections still existed in the hearts of the ancient pair, who saw that the strangers were men of no ordinary character—perhaps princes in disguise. They made many apologies for the poor fare they had to offer, but the strangers had excellent appetites, and ate and drank remarkably well.

THE MIRACULOUS PITCHER—*concluded.*

[*Spell and write*]

admirable, apparently, diminishing, incapable, reverence, conversation, entreated, persisted, appearance, familiar, exercised, mischievous, majestic, occupying, venerable, intermingling.

Although good Mother Baucis was a simple old dame, she could not but think that there was something out of the common way in all that had been going on. So, after helping the guests to bread and honey, and laying a bunch of grapes by each of their plates, she sat down by Philemon, and told him what she had seen in a whisper.

‘Did you ever hear the like?’ asked she.

‘No, I never did,’ answered Philemon, with a smile; ‘and I rather think, my dear old wife, you have been

walking about in a sort of a dream. If I had poured out the milk, I should have seen through the matter at once. There happened to be a little more in the pitcher than you thought, that is all.'

'Ah, husband,' said Baucis, 'say what you will, these are very uncommon people.'

'Well, well,' replied Philemon, still smiling, 'perhaps they are. They certainly do look as if they had seen better days; and I am heartily glad to see them making so comfortable a supper.'

Each of the guests had now taken his bunch of grapes upon his plate. Baucis, who rubbed her eyes in order to see the more clearly, was of opinion that the clusters had grown larger and richer, and that each separate grape seemed to be on the point of bursting with ripe juice. It was a wonder to her to see how such grapes could ever have been produced from the old stunted vine that climbed against the cottage wall.

'Very admirable grapes these!' observed Quicksilver, as he swallowed one after another, without apparently diminishing his cluster. 'Pray, my good host, whence did you gather them?'

'From my own vine,' answered Philemon. 'You may see one of its branches twisting across the window yonder; but wife and I never thought the grapes very fine ones.'

'I never tasted better,' said the guest. 'Another cup of this excellent milk, if you please, and I shall then have supped better than a prince.'

This time, old Philemon bestirred himself, and took up the pitcher; for he was curious to discover if there was any reality in the marvel which Baucis had whispered to him. He knew that his good old wife was incapable of falsehood, and that she was seldom mistaken in what she

supposed to be true ; but this was so very singular a case, that he wanted to see into it with his own eyes. On taking up the pitcher, therefore, he slyly peeped into it, and was fully satisfied that it contained not so much as a single drop. All at once, however, he beheld a little white fountain, which gushed up from the bottom of the pitcher, and speedily filled it to the brim with foaming and fragrant milk. It was lucky that Philemon, in his surprise, did not drop the miraculous pitcher from his hand.

‘Who are ye, wonder-working strangers?’ cried he, even more surprised than his wife had been.

‘Your guests, my good Philemon, and your friends,’ replied the elder traveller, in his mild deep voice, that had something at once sweet and awe-inspiring in it. ‘Give me likewise a cup of the milk ; and may your pitcher never be empty for kind Baucis and yourself, any more than for the needy wayfarer !’

The supper being now over, the strangers requested to be shewn to their place of repose. The old people would gladly have talked with them a little longer, and have expressed the wonder which they felt, and their delight at finding the poor and meagre supper prove so much better and more abundant than they hoped. But the elder traveller had inspired them with such reverence, that they dared not ask him any questions. When left alone, the good old couple spent some little time in conversation about the events of the evening, and then lay down on the floor, and fell fast asleep. They had given up their sleeping-room to the guests, and had no other bed for themselves, save these planks, which I wish had been as soft as their own hearts.

The old man and his wife were stirring betimes in the morning, and the strangers likewise arose with the sun,

and prepared to depart. Philemon hospitably entreated them to remain a little longer, until Baucis could milk the cow, and bake a cake upon the hearth, and, perhaps, find them a few fresh eggs for breakfast. The guests, however, seemed to think it better to get over a good part of their journey before the heat of the day should come on. They therefore persisted in setting out immediately, but asked Philemon and Baucis to walk forth with them a short distance, and shew them the road they were to take.

So they all four issued from the cottage, chatting together like old friends. It was very remarkable, indeed, how familiar the old couple insensibly grew with the elder traveller, and how their good and simple spirits melted into his, even as two drops of water melt into the ocean. And as for Quicksilver, with his keen, quick, laughing wits, he appeared to discover every little thought that but peeped into their minds before they suspected it themselves. They sometimes wished, it is true, that he had not been quite so quick-witted, and also that he would fling away his staff, which looked so mysteriously mischievous, with the snakes always writhing about it. But then, again, Quicksilver shewed himself so very good-humoured, that they would have been rejoiced to keep him in the cottage, staff, snakes, and all, every day, and the whole day long.

‘Ah me! well-a-day!’ exclaimed Philemon, when they had walked a little way from their door. ‘If our neighbours only knew what a blessed thing it is to shew hospitality to strangers, they would tie up all their dogs, and never allow their children to fling another stone.’

‘It is a sin and shame for them to behave so—that it is!’ cried good old Baucis. ‘And I mean to go this very

day and tell some of them what naughty people they are !'

'I fear,' remarked Quicksilver, slyly smiling, 'that you will find none of them at home.'

The elder traveller's brow just then assumed such a grave, stern, and awful grandeur, yet serene withal, that neither Baucis nor Philemon dared to speak a word. They gazed reverently into his face, as if they had been gazing at the sky.

'When men do not feel towards the humblest stranger as if he were a brother,' said the traveller, in tones so deep that they sounded like those of an organ, 'they are unworthy to exist on earth, which was created as the abode of a great human brotherhood !'

Philemon and his wife turned towards the valley, where, at sunset, only the day before, they had seen the meadows, the houses, the gardens, the clumps of trees, the wide, green-margined street, with children playing in it, and all the tokens of business, enjoyment, and prosperity. But what was their astonishment ! There was no longer any appearance of a village ! Even the fertile vale, in the hollow of which it lay, had ceased to have existence. In its stead, they beheld the broad blue surface of a lake, which filled the great basin of the valley, from brim to brim, and reflected the surrounding hills in its bosom, with as tranquil an image as if it had been there ever since the creation of the world. For an instant the lake remained perfectly smooth ; then a little breeze sprang up, and caused the water to dance, glitter, and sparkle in the early sunbeams, and to dash with a pleasant rippling murmur against the shore.

The lake seemed so strangely familiar, that the old couple were greatly perplexed, and felt as if they could

only have been dreaming about a village having lain there ; but the next moment they remembered the vanished dwellings, and the faces and characters of the inhabitants, far too distinctly for a dream. The village had been there yesterday, and now was gone !

‘ Alas ! ’ cried these kind-hearted old people, ‘ what has become of our poor neighbours ? ’

‘ They exist no longer as men and women, ’ said the elder traveller, in his grand and deep voice, while a roll of thunder seemed to echo it at a distance. ‘ There was neither use nor beauty in such a life as theirs ; for they never softened or sweetened the hard lot of mortality by the exercise of kindly affections between man and man. They retained no image of the better life in their bosoms ; therefore the lake that was there of old, has spread itself forth again to reflect the sky ! ’

‘ And as for those foolish people, ’ said Quicksilver, with his mischievous smile, ‘ they are all changed to fishes. There needed but little change, for they were already a scaly set of rascals, and the coldest-blooded beings in existence. ’

‘ As for you, good Philemon, ’ continued the elder traveller, ‘ and you, kind Baucis, you, with your scanty means, have mingled so much heartfelt hospitality with your reception of the homeless stranger, that the milk became a fount of nectar, and the brown loaf and honey were ambrosia. You have done well, my dear old friends ; wherefore request whatever favour you have most at heart, and it is granted. ’

Philemon and Baucis looked at one another ; and then I know not which of the two it was who spoke, but that one uttered the desire of both their hearts.

‘ Let us live together while we live, and leave the

world at the same instant when we die ! for we have always loved one another !’

‘Be it so !’ replied the stranger with majestic kindness. ‘Now, look towards your cottage !’

They did so ; but what was their surprise on beholding a tall building of white marble, with a wide-open portal, occupying the spot where their humble cottage had so lately stood !

‘There is your home,’ said the stranger, kindly smiling on them both. ‘Exercise your hospitality in yonder palace as freely as in the poor hovel to which you welcomed us last evening.’

The old folks fell on their knees to thank him ; but, behold ! neither he nor Quicksilver was there.

So Philemon and Baucis took up their residence in the marble palace, and spent their time, with vast satisfaction to themselves, in making everybody happy and comfortable who happened to pass that way. The milk-pitcher, I must not forget to say, retained its wonderful quality of being never empty when it was desirable to have it full.

Thus the old couple lived in their palace a great, great while, and grew older and older, and very old indeed. At length, however, there came a summer morning, when Philemon and Baucis failed to make their appearance, as on other mornings, with one hospitable smile overspreading both their pleasant faces, to invite the guests of overnight to breakfast. The guests searched everywhere from top to bottom of the spacious palace, and all to no purpose ; but after a great deal of searching, they espied, in front of the portal, two venerable trees, which nobody could remember to have seen there the day before. Yet there they stood, with their roots fastened deep into the soil, and a huge breadth of foliage overshadowing the

whole front of the edifice. One was an oak, and the other a linden-tree, and their boughs, it was strange and beautiful to see, were so closely intertwined together, that each tree seemed to live in the other tree's embrace.

While the guests were marvelling how these trees, that must have required at least a century to grow, could have come to be so tall and venerable in a single night, a breeze sprang up and set their intermingled boughs astir, and then there was a deep broad murmur in the air, as if the two trees were speaking.

‘I am old Philemon!’ murmured the oak.

‘I am old Baucis!’ murmured the linden-tree.

But as the breeze grew stronger, the trees both spoke at once: ‘Philemon! Baucis! Baucis! Philemon!’ as if one were both, and both were one, and talking together in the depths of their mutual heart. It was plain enough to perceive that the good old couple had renewed their youth, and were now to spend a quiet and delightful hundred years or so, Philemon as an oak, and Baucis as a linden-tree. And oh, what a pleasant shade did they fling around them! Whenever a wayfarer passed beneath it, he heard a cheerful whisper of the leaves above his head, and wondered how the sound should so much resemble words like these: ‘Welcome, welcome, dear traveller, welcome!’

[*Write from dictation*]

The ancient couple, now become venerable trees, stood in front of the edifice and intermingled their branches lovingly—the reward of having exercised kindly affections towards their fellow-creatures. The stranger with the majestic appearance, who filled their minds with reverence, and his companion who displayed a mischievous spirit, insisted on leaving in the early morning, and walked along engaged in familiar conversation with the old man and his wife.

LITTLE WHITE LILY.

1.

Little white Lily
Sat by a stone,
Drooping and waiting
Till the sun shone.
Little white Lily
Sunshine has fed ;
Little white Lily
Is lifting her head.

2.

Little white Lily
Said : ' It is good ;
Little white Lily
Has clothing and food.'
Little white Lily,
Dressed like a bride !
Shining with whiteness,
And crowned beside !

3.

Little white Lily
Droopeth with pain,
Waiting and waiting
For the wet rain.
Little white Lily
Holdeth her cup ;
Rain is fast falling
And filling it up.

4.

Little white Lily
Said : ' Good again,
When I am thirsty
To have nice rain ;
Now I am stronger,
Now I am cool ;
Heat cannot burn me,
My veins are so full.'

5.

Little white Lily
Smells very sweet :
On her head sunshine,
Rain at her feet.
Thanks to the sunshine,
Thanks to the rain !
Little white Lily
Is happy again !'

G. MACDONALD.

HISTORY OF LITTLE JACK.

CHAPTER I.

[*Spell and write*]

disabled, cultivate, necessities, gratitude, naturally, charitable,
benefactor, recollected, experiment, assistance, innocent.

There was once a poor lame old man, who lived in the midst of a wild moor, in the north of England. He had formerly been a soldier, and had almost lost the use of one leg by a wound received in battle, when he was fighting against the enemies of his country. This poor man, when

he found himself thus disabled, built a little hut of clay, which he covered with turf dug from the moor. He had a little bit of ground, which he made a shift to cultivate with his own hands. Besides this, he sometimes gained a few halfpence by opening for travellers a gate, which stood near his house. He did not indeed get much, because few people passed that way; what he earned was, however, enough to purchase clothes, and the few necessaries he wanted. He never failed, night and morning, to pray to God; and, as he was known to be an honest man, he was respected by all who knew him.

The old man lived alone. In his walks on the moor, he one day found a little kid that had lost its mother; he took it home to his cottage, fed it and nursed it till it grew strong. Little Nan, for that was the name he gave it, returned his cares with gratitude, and became as much attached to him as a dog. All the day she browsed round his hut, and at night reposed upon the same bed of straw with her master. Frequently did she divert him with her innocent tricks and gambols. She would nestle her little head in his bosom, and eat bread out of his hand. The old man often beheld her with silent joy, and would lift his hands to heaven, and thank God that, even in the midst of poverty and distress, He had raised him up one faithful friend.

One night, in the beginning of winter, the old man thought he heard the feeble cries of a child. As he was naturally charitable, he rose and struck a light; and going out of his cottage, looked about on every side. It was not long before he discerned an infant on the ground. The old man stood amazed at the sight, and knew not what to do. He took it up in his arms, and perceived it was a fine healthy boy, though covered with rags; the

little foundling, too, seemed to be sensible of his kindness, and smiling in his face, stretched out his little arms as if to embrace his benefactor.

When he had brought it into his hut, he began to wonder how he should procure it food ; but looking at Nan, he recollected that she had just lost her kid, and saw her udder distended with milk ; he, therefore, called her to him, and holding the child to her, was overjoyed to find that it sucked as naturally as if it had really found a mother. The goat, too, seemed to receive pleasure from the efforts of the child, and submitted to discharge the duties of a nurse. Contented with this experiment, the old man wrapped the child up as warmly as he could, and stretched himself out to rest.

Early the next morning, he was awakened by the cries of the boy for food ; and with the assistance of the faithful Nan, he appeased its hunger as he had done the night before. The old man became more and more attached to the little foundling, who, in a short time, learned to consider him as a parent, and delighted him with his innocent caresses. Gentle Nanny, too, the goat, seemed to adopt him with equal tenderness as her offspring ; he would nestle close to her, and go to sleep in her bosom. In a short time, little Jack was completely master of his legs ; and as the summer came on, he went with the goat upon the moor, and used to play with her for hours together, frisking about as if he had really been a kid. As to his clothing, Jack had neither shoes, stockings, nor shirt ; but the weather was warm, and he felt himself so much the lighter for every kind of exercise. In a short time after this, he began to imitate sounds ; nor was it long before he learned to speak.

As he grew bigger, Jack became of considerable use to

his father ; he could trust him to look after the gate ; and as to the cooking of the family, it was not long before he could make broth almost as well as his father himself.

[*Write from dictation*]

The disabled soldier, though hardly possessing the necessities of life, being naturally charitable, became the benefactor of the innocent child ; and recollecting the goat, who had lost her kid, he found in her a mother for the boy.

HISTORY OF LITTLE JACK.

CHAPTER II.

[*Spell and write*]

entertain, listening, familiar, difficulty, facility, acquired, astonished, amazement, acquainted, neighbourhood.

During the winter nights, the old man used to entertain Jack with stories of what he had seen during his youth—the battles and sieges he had been witness to, and the hardships he had undergone ; and Jack was never tired of listening. But what delighted him beyond measure, was to see his father shoulder his crutch, instead of a musket, and give the word of command. To the right, to the left, present, fire, march, halt—all this was familiar to Jack's ear as soon as he could speak ; and before he was six years old, he poised and presented a broomstick, which his father gave him for that purpose, with as much grace as any soldier in Europe.

'Never tell an untruth, Jack,' said the old man, 'even though you were to be flayed alive : a soldier never lies.' Jack held up his head, marched across the room,

and promised his father that he would always tell the truth like a soldier. The old man wished that his darling should learn to read and write ; but this was a work of some difficulty, for he had neither books, pens, nor paper in his cabin. But in the summer time, as the old man sat before his cottage, he would draw letters in the sand, and teach Jack to name them, till he knew the whole alphabet ; he then proceeded to words—all which his little pupil learned with great facility ; and he not only acquired the power of reading words, but of tracing all the letters which composed them on the sand. About this time, the poor goat grew ill, and died. He tended her with the greatest affection during her illness, brought her the freshest herbs for food, and would support her head for hours together on his little bosom. But it was all in vain ; he lost his poor mammy, as he used to call her, and was for some time inconsolable. The poor goat was buried in the old man's garden, and thither Jack would often come, and call upon his poor mammy Nan, and ask her why she had left him. One day, as he was thus employed, a lady happened to come by in a carriage, and overheard him. Jack ran in an instant to open the gate ; but the lady stopped, and asked him who he was calling upon. Jack answered, that it was his poor mammy that was buried in the garden. The lady thought it very odd to hear of such a burial-place, and said : ' How did your mama get her living ? '

' She used to graze here upon the moor all day long,' said Jack.

The lady was still more astonished ; but the old man came out of his hut and explained the whole affair to her. She looked at Jack with amazement, but admired his brown face.

‘Will you go with me, little boy?’ said she, ‘and I will take care of you if you behave well.’

‘No,’ said Jack, ‘I must stay with my father; he has taken care of me for many years, and now I must take care of him, otherwise I should like very well to go with such a sweet, good-natured lady.’

The lady was not displeased with Jack’s answer, and putting her hand into her pocket, gave him a piece of money to buy him shoes and stockings, and pursued her journey. Jack was not unacquainted with the use of money, as he had often been sent to the next village to purchase bread and necessities; but he was totally unacquainted with the use of shoes and stockings, which he had never worn in his life, nor felt the want of. The next day, however, the old man bade him run to town, and lay his money out as the lady had desired. It was not long before Jack returned; but the old man was much surprised to see him come back as bare as he went out. ‘Heigh, Jack,’ said he, ‘where are the shoes and stockings which you were to purchase?’

‘Father,’ answered Jack, ‘I went to the shop, and just tried a pair for sport, but I found them so cumbersome that I could not walk; so I laid the money out in a warm jacket for you, because the winter is coming on, and you seem to be more afraid of the cold than formerly.’

It was easy to perceive that Jack had an excellent heart and a generous temper; but one failing he was liable to—though a very good-natured boy, he was a little too jealous of his honour. His father had taught him the use of his hands, and Jack could beat every boy in the neighbourhood of his age and size. Even if they were a head taller, it made no difference to Jack, provided

they said anything to wound his honour. One day that he had been sent to the village, he returned with his eyes black, and his face swelled to a frightful size.

‘What have you been doing now, Jack?’ said the old man.

‘Only fighting with Dick the butcher.’

‘You rogue!’ said the old man, ‘he is twice as big as you are, and the best fighter in all the country.’

‘What does that signify?’ said Jack; ‘he called you an old beggar-man, and then I struck him; and I will strike him again whenever he calls you so, even if he should beat me to pieces; for you know that you are not a beggar-man, but a soldier.’

[*Write from dictation*]

By listening to the entertaining stories of the soldier, he became familiar with things that filled him with amazement. He soon acquired, too, greater facility in soldiers’ exercises than any one in the neighbourhood.

HISTORY OF LITTLE JACK.

CHAPTER III.

[*Spell and write*]

affectionately, usually, endeavour, situation, instruction,
destitute, victuals.

In this manner lived little Jack until he was twelve years old: at this time his kind old father fell sick. Jack did everything he could think of for the poor man; he made him broths, he fed him with his own hands, he watched whole nights by his bedside, supporting his head, and helping him when he wanted to move. But it was all in vain; the old soldier grew daily worse, and

perceived it to be impossible that he should recover. He one day, therefore, called little Jack to his bedside, and pressing his hand affectionately, told him he was just going to die. Little Jack burst into a flood of tears, but his father desired him to compose himself, and attend to the last advice he should be able to give him.

‘I have lived,’ said the old man, ‘a great many years in poverty, but I do not know that I have been worse off than if I had been rich; and though I have often wanted a meal, and always fared hard, I have enjoyed as much health and life as usually falls to the lot of my betters. I am now going to die.’ At this Jack renewed his tears and sobbings, for he was unable to restrain them; but the old man said: ‘Have patience, my child; though I leave this world, I do not doubt but God will pity me, and convey me to a better place, where I shall be happier than I have ever been here. As soon as I am dead, you must go to the next village, and inform the people that they may come and bury me. You must then endeavour to get into service, and work for your living; and if you are strictly honest and sober, I do not doubt that you will find a livelihood, and that God, who is the Father of all, will protect and bless you. Adieu, my child! never forget your poor old father, but in every situation of life discharge your duty, and live like a soldier and a Christian.’ When the old man had uttered these last instructions, his voice failed him, his limbs grew cold and stiff, and in a few minutes he expired without a groan. Little Jack called upon him in vain—in vain endeavoured to revive him. At length, finding all his efforts fruitless, he concluded that he was indeed dead; and therefore, weeping bitterly, he went to the village, as he had been ordered. The poor little boy

was thus left entirely destitute, and knew not what to do; but one of the farmers, who had been acquainted with him before, offered to take him into his house, and gave him his victuals for a few months till he could find a place.

[*Write from dictation*]

The old man affectionately gave the boy his dying instructions, and told him to endeavour, in whatever situation he was placed, to live like a soldier and a Christian.

HISTORY OF LITTLE JACK.

CHAPTER IV.

[*Spell and write*]

wanderings, good-natured, considered, manufacture, interested, examining, quarrelling, respectfully, industrious, particularly, mechanical, apprenticeship, proficient, ordinary, articles.

The farmer died, and poor Jack had to begin his wanderings in search of work. As he was walking along, tired and hungry, he saw a blazing fire at some distance, and on coming near it, he found it to be one of the fires of a great ironwork. The foreman took pity on him, and gave him, what Jack was overjoyed to have—work to do. He worked so steadily and good-naturedly, never grudging to do everything that required to be done; that he gained the good opinion of the foreman, who considered him the best little boy in all the factory. But Jack had, in his openness of heart, told the boys who worked with him the story of his life, and they teased him by baaing like a goat, and calling the good old soldier who had taken care of him a beggar. Jack

could not brook this, and many a stout battle he had to fight in defence of his old father, and his mammy the goat.

It happened one day that a large party of ladies and gentlemen came to see the works. The master attended them, and explained every part of the manufacture. They were much interested in the huge furnaces in which the iron ore was melted down, and from the bottom of which it flowed in liquid streams. They beheld with equal pleasure the sandy moulds into which the iron flowed, and where it cooled down into solid masses, to be applied to the service of man. While they were examining all these things, they were disturbed by a sudden noise and discord proceeding from one portion of the works, and on inquiring the cause, it turned out that Jack was fighting with Tom the collier. Jack was instantly ordered to come before his master, who had resolved to discharge him instantly as a troublesome and quarrelsome boy. Jack appeared covered with blood and dirt, and stood before his judge in a posture modest but firm. 'Is this the reward,' said his master, 'you little vagabond, for all my kindness? I can bear your broils and fighting no longer. You must leave my service instantly.'

'Sir,' said Jack, very respectfully, 'I am extremely sorry to have offended you—nor have I ever done it willingly. If the other boys would only mind their business as well as I do, and not molest me, you would have no cause to complain, for I can say that since I came here, I have given none of them offence, and have done willingly whatever I was ordered.'

'That's true, indeed,' said the foreman, 'I must do little Jack the justice to say that there is not a more

sober, industrious, honest lad in all the place. Set him to what you will, he never skulks, never grumbles, never slights his work ; and were it not for a little passion for fighting, there would not be his fellow in England.'

'Well,' said the master, a little soothed ; 'but what is the cause of all this disturbance ?'

'Sir,' answered Jack, 'it is Tom who has been calling my father a beggar-man and my mother a goat ; and when I asked him to be quiet, he went baaing like a goat all about the place. I could not bear this, for my father was an honest soldier, and if I did suck a goat, she was the best creature in the world, and I won't hear her abused while I have any strength in my body !'

At this, the whole audience could scarcely refrain from laughter ; but a lady who was in the company, seemed particularly interested about little Jack, and said : 'This must surely be the little boy who opened a gate for me on Norcot Moor several years ago. I was much pleased with him then, and since he deserves the good character your foreman gives him, I will gladly take him into my service.'

Jack thankfully accepted the lady's offer. His business now was to help in the stable, to water the horses, to clean shoes, to run errands, and to do many other little things—all which he did with the greatest good-humour, obliging every one, and quarrelling with nobody. Of horses he was extremely fond, and before long he could manage them more dexterously than any other person in all the country round.

Jack soon shewed a great turn for all the useful and mechanical arts. He had served an apprenticeship already to the manufacture of iron, and of this he was rather vain. 'For,' he would say to his fellow-servants,

‘how could you plough without iron—how would you dig—how would you even light a fire, dress a dinner, shoe a horse, cut, saw, or do the least thing in the world without the help of iron, and us workmen of the forge?’ As might be expected, he paid frequent visits to the blacksmith’s shop, and ere long learned to shoe a horse ; and what is more, to make the shoe as neatly as any one in all the country round. Nor were Jack’s talents confined to things made out of iron. By constantly using his eyes and hands, he picked up not only a great deal of knowledge about other things, but a great deal of skill too. He learned something of saddlery, and could make very good saddles. In carpentry, too, he was a proficient, and could use the saw, the plane, and the hammer, as well as most, and could make many of the ordinary articles turned out of a country carpenter’s shop. In a short time, he was looked upon by everybody as a very active, ingenious boy.

[*Write from dictation*]

The visitors were interested in examining the manufactory, when they heard quarrelling in another part of the building. When Jack was brought before them, he behaved respectfully ; but as he considered that the right lay on his side, he said what he could for himself. Finding that he was an industrious boy, one of the visitors took him into service, and he became a very useful servant.



HISTORY OF LITTLE JACK.

CHAPTER V.

[Spell and write]

occupation, accompanied, eagerness, expedition, regiment, dangerous, regretted, gratitude, determined, approaching, respectable, independent, cultivate, relieve, circumstances, consequence.

How it happened that Jack had to leave this place where he had been so happy, we need not tell. But we next find him following the occupation of his father, and on his way to India as a soldier. The ship anchored near an island, and some of the officers, accompanied by Jack, landed to shoot and to procure water. When there, Jack, in his too great eagerness to find a bird which had been shot, lost himself. The ship went away without him, and Jack had to spend some months on the island alone, getting his living as best he could. At last he hailed a ship which was passing that way, told his story, and was conveyed to India, where he accompanied a regiment on a warlike expedition.

Being taken prisoner along with many others, he soon was regarded as the chief man among them all; for he had learned to turn his hand to many useful things, and could not only cure the chief's horse of a dangerous fever, but make horseshoes and saddles, and many other useful things.

At last the time came for the prisoners to be set free, and Jack left, much regretted by the tribes among whom he had been living, and loaded with presents. One of the officers who had been prisoner along with him, procured him his discharge out of gratitude for some favours he had conferred on him. Jack then sold all the rich

presents he had received, and returned to England with a great deal of money in his pocket.

But Jack was too active and too prudent to give himself up to idleness. After considering various schemes of business, he determined to take up the iron trade, and for that purpose made a journey into the north, and found his old master as active as ever. He was glad to see Jack, and being in want of a foreman, he gave him this post, paying him a good salary. Jack worked for his master as if it had been for himself, and was as industrious as he was inflexibly honest.

In a few years, the master began to find old age approaching, and took Jack into partnership, and committed the whole business to his care. He continued to exert the same qualities now which he had done before, and was soon one of the most respectable and wealthy manufacturers in the country. He married, and saw a family grow up round him—all like himself, honest, industrious, and independent. He built a small country cottage, too, on the spot where the old soldier's hut had stood, and used to retire there frequently to cultivate a little garden.

To all his poor neighbours he was kind, and relieved them when in distress. To his friends and acquaintances he would sometimes relate his story, in order to prove that it is of very little consequence how a man comes into the world, provided he behaves well, and discharges his duty manfully while he is in it.

[*Write from dictation*]

When following the occupation of a soldier, he accompanied the expedition with eagerness, and was rewarded with gratitude. After he returned to his native country, he became a respectable and independent manufacturer, ready always to relieve the needy, and to help his acquaintances.

RICH AND POOR.

1.

The rich man's home stands high and fair,
With tall trees overhead,
And winding walks, and gardens rare,
And wild woods round it spread.

2.

Beside his gate stands, snug and small,
The poor man's cottage neat,
With jasmine nailed against the wall,
And rows of roses sweet.

3.

The rich man rideth, far and late,
Around his wide domain,
And servants tall his bidding wait,
And take his bridle-rein.

4.

The poor man cometh home at night,
His spade across his arm ;
His wife has swept the hearth-stone bright,
And kept his supper warm.

5.

Within the rich man's lordly halls,
Young footsteps lightly trip,
And there the sweetest music falls
From childhood's rosy lip.

6.

And little arms as fondly meet
The poor man's neck around ;
As merrily his children's feet
Along the red tiles sound.

7.

The rich man hath his many friends,
And some are true and dear—
His loaded board with plenty bends,
And they sit smiling near.

8.

The poor man has his feast-days too,
He spreads his frugal fare,
And neighbours kind, and friends a few,
Drop gladly in to share.

9.

The rich man has his cares and ills,
That poor men do not know—
As snow will lie upon the hills,
When summer's down below.

10.

And want will turn the poor man pale,
And need, his soul affright—
As swelling streams will flood the vale,
That cannot reach the height.

11.

But, rich or poor, one bond they know,
Each is his neighbour's brother,
For neither, on this earth below,
Could do without the other.

12.

Each has his pleasures, each his pains :
The mean man, and the great,
Must bow to that which God ordains,
Who fixes every state.

THE CRAB AND HER MOTHER.

Said an old crab to a young one : 'Why do you walk so crooked, child? walk straight!'

'Mother,' said the young crab, 'shew me the way, will you? and when I see you taking a straight course, I will try and follow.'

[*Write the above from dictation.*]

THE FOX AND THE WOODMAN.

[*Spell and write*]

understanding, immediately, perceived, upbraided.

A fox, hard pressed by the hounds after a long run, came up to a man who was cutting wood, and begged him to afford him some place where he might hide himself. The man shewed him his own hut, and the fox, creeping in, hid himself in a corner. The hunters presently came up, and asking the man whether he had seen the fox. 'No,' said he, but pointed with his finger to the corner. They, however, not understanding the hint, were off again immediately. When the fox perceived that they were out of sight, he was stealing off without saying a word. But the man upbraided him, saying : 'Is this the way you take leave of your host, without a word of thanks for your safety?' 'A pretty host!' said the fox, turning round upon him, 'if you had been as honest with your fingers as you were with your tongue, I should not have left your roof without bidding you farewell.'

[*Write from dictation*]

When the fox perceived that his *enemies* had left without understanding the hint, he made off immediately.

THE TRAVELLERS AND THE BEAR.

[Spell and write]

difficulty, companion, immovably.

Two friends were travelling on the same road together when they met with a bear. The one, in great fear, without a thought of his companion, climbed up into a tree and hid himself. The other, seeing that he had no chance single-handed against the bear, had nothing left but to throw himself on the ground and feign to be dead; for he had heard that the bear will never touch a dead body. As he thus lay, the bear came up to his head, muzzling and snuffing at his nose, and ears, and heart, but the man immovably held his breath, and the beast, supposing him to be dead, walked away. When the bear was fairly out of sight, his companion came down out of the tree, and asked what it was that the bear whispered to him; 'For,' says he, 'I observed he put his mouth very close to your ear.' 'Why,' replies the other, 'it was no great secret; he only bade me have a care how I kept company with those who, when they get into difficulty, leave their friends in the lurch.'

[Write from dictation]

His companion perceived the difficulty and danger in which he was placed, but he kept himself safe in the tree. The bear fortunately supposed the man to be dead.



THE LION, THE ASS, AND THE FOX HUNTING.

[Spell and write]

bethought, dividing, indignation, reserved, misfortunes.

The lion, the ass, and the fox formed a party to go out hunting. They took a large booty, and when the sport was ended bethought themselves of having a hearty meal. The lion bade the ass allot the spoil. So, dividing it into three equal parts, the ass begged his friends to make their choice; at which the lion, in great indignation, fell upon the ass and tore him to pieces. He then bade the fox make a division; who, gathering the whole into one great heap, reserved but the smallest mite for himself. 'Ah! friend,' says the lion, 'who taught you to make so just a division?' 'I wanted no other lesson,' replied the fox, 'than the ass's fate.'

[Write from dictation]

I bethought myself that it was better to learn wisdom from the misfortunes of others than from my own, and I reserved my indignation at what I saw.

BOASTFUL TOMMY.

[Spell and write]

different, particular, deserved, inquired, reasoning, obtained, persuasion, practising, remember.

'Now, Aunt Mary,' said little Tommy, 'we must have a story.'

'What do you mean by *must*, Tommy?' asked his aunt.

'Well, then, we should like a story,' said Tommy, who knew well what his aunt meant.

‘That is a different thing,’ replied Aunt Mary; ‘but what did you do to-day to deserve a story, Tommy?’

‘Oh, I have done twenty things at least;’ cried her little nephew, who was rather fond of boasting, and did not always tell the exact truth.

‘Very good,’ said Aunt Mary; ‘what were they?’

‘Oh, you know it would take the whole day to tell you of them all,’ answered the little boy.

‘Still I must have some of them, Tommy.’

‘Very well then,’ said Tommy, tossing his head; ‘I weeded the garden this morning.’

‘Whose garden, Tommy?’

‘Why, my own to be sure,’ replied Tommy.

‘I suppose you did that to oblige yourself, Tommy?’

‘No, indeed; I only did so because papa would take the garden from me if he saw any weeds in it.’

‘Of course, then, if you did that only because you were obliged to do it, I don’t see any need to reward you for it,’ said Aunt Mary. ‘What next?’

‘I wish you would not be so particular,’ said Tommy, twisting his fingers in the vain effort to discover another good deed. At last he said: ‘I did not do my lessons as badly as yesterday. I am sure of that, Aunt Mary.’

‘If your twenty good deeds are all like those two, Tommy,’ said his aunt, ‘I fear you have no great chance of a story. What do you say, Annie?’ she asked her little niece, who was standing beside her.

Annie blushed and answered: ‘Miss Hamilton said I might have played my scales better if I had tried.’

‘What am I to do, then?’ asked her aunt, with a smile.

‘Could you not, dear auntie, just tell us one story without deserving it?’ asked Annie.

‘To be sure I could, dear ; but you know that would be a great favour.’

‘Well, then, will you please do us a great favour, and tell us a story?’ said Annie.

‘Ah, now I think I must indeed, for nobody could resist when a child knows how to ask. It must be a short story, as we have lost so much time in searching for Tommy’s twenty things.’

‘And I have given them to you, Aunt Mary,’ said Tommy pertly.

‘How can that be, Master Tom?’ inquired she.

‘I have given you two, and there is nought to add to make it twenty.’

Aunt Mary could not repress a smile at Tommy’s way of reasoning and said : ‘Well, Tommy, that just reminds me of a story, and as it is a very short one, it will just do for us. A very smart boy went to college ; when he came home he thought himself very clever, and was anxious to shew his father that he was so. One day he had obtained permission from his father to ride on a chestnut horse belonging to him. The horse stood in readiness at the hall-door, and though the young man was eager to have his ride, he could not resist practising his wit a little.

“Now, father,” he said, “you may think there is but one chestnut horse there, but I see two.”

“Do you,” said his father ; “I wish you would shew them to me.”

“Well, then,” answered the son, picking up a horse-chestnut ; “a horse-chestnut or a chestnut horse is all the same thing, so you see there are two, and I am right, father.”

“Very good, my boy,” answered his father, jumping

into the saddle ; “ I will take a ride on this one, you can take the other.”

‘ Now, Tommy,’ added Aunt Mary, ‘ mind this story, and remember if you had been less smart you might have had a longer one.’

[*Write from dictation*]

Tommy’s aunt was rather particular, he thought, when she said he did not deserve a story. She told the story, however, of the very smart boy who obtained permission to ride on a chestnut horse belonging to his father.

KING LEAR AND HIS THREE DAUGHTERS.

1.

King Lear once ruled in this land
With princely power and peace ;
And had all things with heart’s content,
That might his joys increase.
Amongst those things that nature gave,
Three daughters fair had he,
So princely seeming, beautiful,
As fairer could not be.

2.

So on a time it pleased the king
A question thus to move,
Which of his daughters to his grace
Could shew the dearest love :
‘ For to my age you bring content,’
Quoth he, ‘ then let me hear,
Which of you three in plighted troth
The kindest will appear.’

3.

To whom the eldest thus began :
‘ Dear father mine,’ quoth she,
‘ Before your face to do you good,
My blood shall rendered be :
And for your sake my bleeding heart
Shall here be cut in twain,
Ere that I see your reverend age
The smallest grief sustain.’

4.

‘ And so will I,’ the second said,
‘ Dear father, for your sake,
The worst of all extremities
I’ll gladly undertake :
And serve your highness night and day
With diligence and love ;
That sweet content and quietness
Discomforts may remove.’

5.

‘ In doing so, you glad my soul,’
The aged king replied ;
‘ But what say’st thou, my youngest girl,
How is thy love allied ?’
‘ My love,’ quoth young Cordelia then,
‘ Which to your grace I owe,
Shall be the duty of a child,
And that is all I’ll shew.’

6.

‘ And wilt thou shew no more,’ quoth he,
‘ Than doth thy duty bind ?’
I well perceive thy love is small,
When as no more I find.

Henceforth I banish thee my court,
Thou art no child of mine ;
Nor any part of this my realm
By favour shall be thine.

7.

'Thy elder sisters' loves are more
Than I can well demand,
To whom I equally bestow
My kingdom and my land,
My pompal state and all my goods,
That lovingly I may
With those thy sisters be maintained
Until my dying day.'

8.

Thus flattering speeches won renown
By these two sisters here ;
The third had causeless banishment,
Yet was her love more dear :
For poor Cordelia patiently
Went wand'ring up and down,
Unhelped, unpitied, gentle maid,
Through many an English town.

9.

Until at last in famous France
She gentler fortunes found ;
Though poor and bare, yet she was deemed
The fairest on the ground :
Where, when the king her virtues heard,
And this fair lady seen,
With full consent of all his court,
He made his wife and queen.

KING LEAR—*concluded.*

10.

Her father, old King Lear, this while
With his two daughters stayed :
Forgetful of their promised loves,
Full soon the same decayed ;
And living in Queen Regan's court,
The eldest of the twain,
She took from him his chiefest means,
And most of all his train.

11.

For whereas twenty men were wont
To wait with bended knee,
She gave allowance but to ten,
And after scarce to three ;
Nay, one she thought too much for him ;
So took she all away,
In hope that in her court, good king,
He would no longer stay.

12.

' Am I rewarded thus,' quoth he,
' In giving all I have
Unto my children, and to beg
For what I lately gave ?
I'll go unto my Goneril :
My second child, I know,
Will be more kind and pitiful,
And will relieve my woe.'

13.

Full fast he hies then to her court ;
Who, when she heard his moan,
Returned him answer, that she grieved
That all his means were gone ;
But no way could relieve his wants ;
Yet, if that he would stay
Within her kitchen, he should have
What scullions gave away.

14.

When he had heard with bitter tears,
He made his answer then :
' In what I did, let me be made
Example to all men.
I will return again,' quoth he,
' Unto my Regan's court ;
She will not use me thus, I hope,
But in a kinder sort.'

15.

Where when he came she gave command
To drive him thence away :
When he was well within her court
(She said) he would not stay.
Then back again to Goneril
The woful king did hie,
That in her kitchen he might have
What scullion-boys set by.

16.

But there of that he was denied,
Which she had promised late ;
For once refusing, he should not
Come after to her gate.

Thus 'twixt his daughters for relief
He wandered up and down ;
Being glad to feed on beggar's food,
That lately wore a crown.

17.

And calling to remembrance then
His youngest daughter's words,
That said the duty of a child
Was all that love affords ;
But doubting to repair to her
Whom he had banished so,
Grew frantic mad ; for in his mind
He bore the wounds of woe :

18.

Which made him rend his milkwhite locks
And tresses from his head,
And all with blood bestain his cheeks,
With age and honour spread.
To hills and woods and watery founts
He made his hourly moan,
Till hills and woods and senseless things
Did seem to sigh and groan.

19.

Even thus possessed with discontenta,
He passéd o'er to France,
In hopes from fair Cordelia there
To find some gentler chance ;
Most virtuous dame ! who when she heard
Of this her father's grief,
As duty bound she quickly sent
Him comfort and relief :

20.

And by a train of noble peers,
In brave and gallant sort,
She gave in charge he should be brought
To Aganippus' court ;
Whose royal king with noble mind
So freely gave consent
To muster up his knights at arms,
To fame and courage bent.

21.

And so to England came with speed,
To repossess King Lear,
And drive his daughters from their thrones
By his Cordelia dear.
Where she, true-hearted noble queen,
Was in the battle slain ;
Yet he, good king, in his old days,
Possessed his crown again.

22.

But when he heard Cordelia's death,
Who died indeed for love
Of her dear father, in whose cause
She did this battle move,
He swooning fell upon her breast,
From whence he never parted :
But on her bosom left his life,
That was so truly hearted.

Old Ballad.

END OF FIRST PART.

SECOND PART.

THE FIR-TREE.

[Spell and write]

ascertain, diminutive, companions, existence, particular, ornamented, brilliant, gloriously, anxious, leisurely, certainly, concealed.

In the depths of the forest, there stood a pretty little fir-tree. It was placed very nicely, for it could get as much sunshine and air as it wanted, and it was surrounded by a number of taller companions, both firs and pines. But the little fir-tree did so long to grow taller! It thought nothing of the warm sun and the fresh air, and cared still less for the peasant-children who strolled about and chattered, whenever they came to gather wild strawberries and raspberries. They would often bring a pipkin full of berries, or lay them out on a handful of straw, and then seat themselves near the little fir-tree, saying: 'Well, this is a sweet little tree!' But the tree was quite insensible to any such praise.

In the following year, it had grown a notch taller, and the year after it was taller still by another notch; for with fir-trees it is easy to ascertain, by the number of notches, how many years old they are.

'Oh! how I wish I were as tall as the other trees!' sighed the diminutive fir; 'and then I should spread my branches all around, and my top would overlook the wide world. Birds would then build nests in my

branches, and when the wind blew I should be able to bow with as much dignity as the rest of my companions.'

It took no delight in the sunshine, or the birds, or the rosy clouds that sailed over its head morning and evening. 'Oh! could I but grow and grow, and become tall and old! That is the only thing worth caring for in this world,' thought the tree.

'Enjoy your youth,' said the sunbeams; 'enjoy your fresh growth, and your young existence, while it lasts.'

And the wind kissed the tree, and the dew shed tears over it; but the fir-tree could not understand either of them.

When Christmas was drawing near, some very young trees were felled; several trees, indeed, that were neither so tall nor so old as this particular fir-tree, which could not rest for longing to get away from its native place. These young trees, that were chosen as being the prettiest of all, were not deprived of their branches, and were laid upon wagons, and taken away from the forest.

'Whither can they be going?' asked our fir-tree. 'What is to be done with them?'

'We know—we know,' twittered the sparrows, 'for we have looked in at the windows, in yonder town! We know what is to be done with them. Oh, they are raised to the very highest honours, I promise you! We saw through the windows how they were stuck up in a warm room, and ornamented with a host of fine things, such as gilt apples, ginger-bread, and play-things, besides hundreds of tapers.'

'And then'—asked the fir-tree with trembling eagerness—'and then—what next?'

'Why we saw nothing further; but it was an incomparable sight!'

‘I wonder whether I am destined to so brilliant a career!’ exclaimed the fir-tree in ecstasy. ‘Oh, how I wish I were already placed on the wagon! How I wish I were in the warm room, with all the fine things about me! And then—why surely something still better must be in store, something far finer still, or else they would not deck me out so smartly! Oh! I am so weary with longing—I can’t tell how I feel!’

‘Enjoy our gifts,’ said the air and the sunbeams; ‘enjoy your bright young days in the open air.’

But the tree would not enjoy himself, and kept growing and growing. So towards Christmas he was felled before any of the others. The axe clove right through his pith, and down he fell with a groan.

The tree revived a little when he was unpacked, together with the other trees, in a courtyard, and he heard a man observe: ‘This is a beauty! We only want one!’

Two well-dressed servants now came, and carried off the fir-tree to a fine large room. The fir-tree was placed in a large barrel filled with sand; but nobody could perceive it was a barrel, as it was covered round with green baize, and stood on a handsome carpet. Oh! how the tree quaked!

What was going to be done? Both the servants and the young ladies helped to adorn it. On one branch they hung little nets cut out of coloured paper, and each net was filled with sweetmeats; gilt apples and walnuts hung down from others, as if they had grown there; and above a hundred tapers—white, blue, and red—were fastened to the branches. Beneath the green leaves were placed dolls that looked, for all the world, like living creatures. The tree had never seen any such

before; and on the topmost summit was fastened a star, all over spangles, that was right royally splendid to behold.

“This evening it will shine most gloriously!” they all said.

“Oh!” thought the tree, “if it were but evening! If the tapers could but be lighted! And then what is to be done next? I wonder whether the trees from our forest will come and admire me? And whether the sparrows will peep in through the window-panes? And whether I have taken root here, and shall remain decked out in this fashion through both winter and summer?”

At length the tapers were lit; and a grand sight it was, to be sure. And now the folding-doors were thrown open, and in rushed a whole troop of children, as though they would overturn the tree, while their elders followed in a more leisurely manner. The little ones stood dumb-struck for a moment, and then directly after set up such shouts of joy, that the room rang with the sound. They danced round the tree, and one present after another was plucked off from its branches.

“What are they about?” thought the tree. “What will come next?” And as each taper burned down to the branches, it was put out, and then the children had leave given them to rifle the tree. O, how they did set upon it to be sure! And how its branches cracked! Had it not been fastened by the gold star at the top to the ceiling, it would have been overturned to a certainty.

The children danced about with their pretty toys, and nobody took any further notice of the tree, except the old nurse, who came and rummaged amongst the

branches to see if a fig or an apple had not been left there by chance.

Next morning, the man-servant and the maid came in. 'Now, I'm going to be tricked out again in all my finery!' thought the tree. But they dragged him out of the room, and upstairs, and then flung him on the floor in a dark corner, where daylight never shone. 'What's the meaning of this?' thought the tree. 'What shall I do here? And what can I hear in such a place?' And he leaned against the wall, still thinking and thinking. And he had plenty of time for reflection, as days and nights passed by, and nobody came up; and when at length somebody did come, it was only to stow away some large chests in the corner. So the tree was now as completely concealed as though his existence had been entirely forgotten.

'It is winter abroad,' thought the tree; 'the ground must now be hard and covered with snow, so they can't plant me; therefore I am to be kept safe here until spring. That is no bad plan. Really, people are very kind! I only wish it was not so dark, and so terribly lonely here! There's not even a little hare to enliven one! How nice it was to be in the forest when the snow was lying on the ground, and the hare used to jump past me—or even when he leaped over me, though I was not well pleased at the time, I remember. It is so dreadfully lonely up here!' 'Peep! peep!' squeaked a little mouse, stealing forth, followed by another. They sniffed at the fir-tree, and then settled themselves between its branches.

'It is bitterly cold,' said the little mice, 'or else we should be very well off here—shouldn't we, you old fir-tree?'

‘I am not old,’ said the fir-tree; ‘there are many a great deal older than I.’

‘Where do you come from?’ inquired the mice, ‘and what’s your name?’ for they were vastly curious. ‘Tell us something about the prettiest place in the world. Have you been there? Have you been in the store-room, where there is cheese lying on the shelves, and hams hanging to the ceiling; where one may dance upon tallow candles, and come out twice as fat as one goes in!’

‘I don’t know of any such place,’ said the tree; ‘but I know of our forest, where the sun shines, and the birds sing.’ And then he related the story of his youth; and the mice, who had never heard the like before, listened very attentively, and then observed: ‘How much you have seen, and how happy you have been!’

‘I happy!’ exclaimed the fir-tree; and then he thought over all he had told. ‘Well! those were, to be sure, rather pleasant times.’ And then he related all about Christmas-eve, and how he was decked out with cakes and tapers.

‘O!’ cried the little mouse, ‘how happy you have been, you old fir-tree!’

‘I am not old,’ said the tree. ‘It’s only this winter that I have come from the forest, and so I have been thrown back in my growth.’

‘What pretty things you do relate!’ said the little mice. And the following night, they returned with four other little mice, that they might hear the tree tell his story; and the oftener he told it, the more distinctly he remembered everything; and he could not help thinking ‘those were right pleasant times, but they will not come back again.’

But what, think you, happened? Why, one morning there came some people, who made a great ado upon the floor; the chests were shoved aside, and the tree was drawn forth. It's true, they flung it somewhat roughly on the floor; but a servant immediately dragged it towards the stairs, on which shone the daylight.

'Now I am going to begin life anew,' thought the tree, as he felt the fresh air and the welcome sunbeams on reaching the court below. It was all done so fast, that the tree forgot entirely to think of himself; besides, there was so much to be seen all about him. The court led to a garden, where everything was in full bloom. The roses hung over the little trellis, and looked so fresh, and smelt so sweet; while the lime-trees were in blossom, and the swallows were flying about, saying: 'Twit—twit—twit—my mate is coming!' But it was not the fir-tree they meant.

'Now I shall really live!' cried the latter, rejoicing and spreading out his branches, that were, alas! all withered and yellow; and there he lay in a corner amongst weeds and nettles. The gilt-paper star was still stuck in the top of the tree, and sparkled in the bright sunshine.

Two of the lively children, who had danced round the tree and taken such delight in it at Christmas, happened to be playing in the court. The youngest ran and tore off the gold star.

'See what is still sticking to the ugly old fir-tree!' said the child, as he trampled on the branches till they cracked beneath his boots.

And the tree looked upon the blooming flower-garden, and then thought of himself, and wished he had been left in his dark corner on the floor. He recalled his

early youth in the forest, the merry Christmas evening, and the little mice who were so pleased at hearing his story.

‘It’s all gone and past,’ said the old tree. ‘Would that I had known my own happiness while it lasted! It’s past—past for ever!’

A lad now came and chopped the tree into small fagots, which were then made into a bundle. It now burned up briskly under a large brewing-copper, and the tree sighed so deeply that every sigh was like a little pistol-shot. So the children left off playing, and came and sat near the fire, and looked at it, saying, ‘Pop—pop!’ But at every pop, which was a deep sigh, the tree was thinking of some summer’s day in the forest, or of some winter’s night when the stars shone brightly; and then the tree was burned to ashes.

The boys played in the garden, and the youngest wore upon his breast the gilt star that the tree had worn on its happiest evening, which was long since over, as all was over with the tree, and must now be with this story; for all stories must finish at last.

[*Write from dictation.*]

If you read this tale carefully and leisurely, you will ascertain how the fir-tree complained to his companions of his diminutive form and low station, while his particular ambition was to lead an ornamental and gloriously brilliant existence. For this, only, was he anxious. The poor tree certainly obtained his wish, but how soon was his existence cut short, and his brightness concealed in a garret.

THE ELDEST SON.

[*Spell and write*]

accosted, instrument, enlisted, prospering, unnatural, distresses,
security, habitation, embrace.

As we stood at the window of an inn that fronted the public prison, a person arrived on horseback, well though plainly dressed in a blue frock-coat, with his hair cut short, and a gold-laced hat upon his head. Alighting, and giving his horse to the landlord, he advanced to an old man who was at work paving the street, and accosted him in these words: 'This is hard work for such an old man as you.' So saying, he took the instrument out of his hand, and began to thump the pavement. After a few strokes: 'Have you no son,' said he, 'to save you this labour?'

'Yes, please your honour,' replied the senior, 'I have three hopeful lads, but at present they are out of the way.'

'Honour not me!' cried the stranger; 'it more becomes me to honour your gray hairs. Where are those sons you talk of?'

The old pavior said that his eldest son was a captain in the East Indies, and the youngest had lately enlisted as a soldier in hopes of prospering like his brother. The gentleman desiring to know what was become of the second, he wiped his eyes, and owned he had taken upon him his old father's debts, for he was now in prison hard by.

The traveller made three quick steps towards the jail, then turning short: 'Tell me,' said he, 'has that unnatural captain sent you nothing to relieve your distresses?'

‘Call him not unnatural!’ replied the other. ‘God’s blessing be upon him! he sent me a great deal of money, but I made a bad use of it. I lost it by being security for a gentleman that was my landlord, and was stripped of all I had in the world besides.’

At that instant a young man, thrusting out his head and neck between two iron bars in the prison-window, exclaimed: ‘Father! father! if my brother William is in life, that is he!’

‘I am! I am!’ cried the stranger, clasping the old man in his arms, and shedding a flood of tears; ‘I am your son Willy, sure enough!’ Before the father, who was quite confounded, could make any return to this tenderness, a decent old woman, bolting out from the door of a poor habitation, cried: ‘Where is my boy—where is my dear Willy?’ The captain no sooner beheld her than he quitted his father, and ran into her embrace.

[*Write from dictation*]

The stranger accosted the old man, and took his instrument of labour from his hands, while he heard the tale of his distresses, and the losses he had endured by being security for a gentleman. He was then led to the door of a poor habitation, where he met his mother, and was locked in her embrace.

THE RAIN.

[*Spell and write*]

annoyed, complained, escaped, patiently, providence.

A merchant was riding home from a fair, and had a portmanteau with a large sum of money behind him. It was raining very heavily, and the good man became wet through. He was annoyed about this, and complained

very much that God had given him such bad weather for his journey.

His way led him through a thick forest. To his great terror he saw a robber standing there, who aimed his gun at him, and drew the trigger. He would have certainly been killed, but the powder had become damp with the rain, and the gun would not go off.

The merchant immediately gave spur to his horse, and happily escaped the danger.

When he was in safety, he said to himself: ‘What a fool I was to complain about the bad weather, instead of taking it patiently as a providence of God! If the sky had been bright, and the air pure and dry, I should now be lying dead in my blood, and my children would wait in vain for their father’s return.

‘The rain at which I murmured, saved my property and life. In future, I will not forget what the proverb says :

“What God sends is always well,
Though why, ’tis often hard to tell.”

[*Write from dictation*]

He had been annoyed, and had complained when he ought to have borne patiently the weather which Providence sent, and which was the cause of his escape.

WRITTEN IN MARCH.

1.

The cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,

The green field sleeps in the sun ;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest ;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising ;
There are forty feeding like one !

2.

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the hill ;
The plough-boy is whooping anon, anon.
There's joy in the mountains ;
There's life in the fountains ;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing ;
The rain is over and gone !

W. WORDSWORTH.

THE RAVEN AND THE FOX.

[*Spell and write*]

enraged, answered, disguised, victorious, surprised, undeceived,
generously, maliciously, flatterers.

A raven carried away a piece of poisoned meat in his claws, which the enraged gardener had thrown there to poison his neighbour's cats.

He was just going to eat it on the top of an old oak, when a fox crept towards him, and cried : 'Hail, bird of Jupiter !'

'For whom do you take me?' asked the raven.

‘For whom do I take you?’ answered the fox. ‘Are you not the active eagle, who is sent down daily from the right hand of Jupiter to feed me, poor creature, from that oak? Why do you disguise yourself? Do I not see the gift in your victorious claw, which Jupiter still sends me by you?’

The raven was surprised and much pleased to be taken for an eagle. ‘I must not undeceive the fox,’ thought he.

Generously stupid, he allowed his prey to fall down, and flew proudly away.

The fox caught the meat with a laugh, and devoured it with malicious joy. But his joy was soon turned to pain, the poison began to work, and he died.

[*Write from dictation*]

The surprised crow generously gave his prey to the malicious flatterer, who called him a disguised eagle, and was quickly undeceived. The fox was poisoned.

THE MISER.

‘What an unhappy man I am!’ said a miser to his neighbour. ‘They have robbed me of the treasure I had buried in my garden last night, and they have put worthless stones in its place.’

‘But you would not have made any use of your treasure!’ answered his neighbour. ‘Just imagine that the stone is your treasure; and you will be just as happy as you were before!’

[*Write this fable from dictation.*]

THE HUSBAND WHO WAS TO MIND THE HOUSE.

Once on a time, there was a man who was so cross and surly, he never thought his wife did anything right in the house. So one evening, at hay-making time, he came home, scolding and shewing his teeth, and making a great uproar.

'Dear love, don't be angry! There's a good man,' said his goody; 'to-morrow let us change work. I'll go out with the mowers and mow, and you shall mind the house at home!'

Yes, the husband thought that would do very well. 'He was quite willing,' he said.

So, early next morning, his goody took a scythe over her shoulder and went out into the hay-field with the mowers, and began to mow; but the man was to mind the house, and do the work at home.

First of all, he wanted to churn the butter; but when he had churned awhile, he got thirsty and went down to the cellar to tap a barrel of ale. So just when he had knocked in the bung, and was putting the tap into the cask, he heard overhead the pig come into the kitchen. Then off he ran up the cellar steps, with the tap in his hand as fast as he could, to look after the pig, lest it should upset the churn; but when he got up, and saw the pig had already knocked the churn over, and stood there routing and grunting amongst the cream, which was running over the floor, he got so wild with rage that he quite forgot the ale-barrel, and ran at the pig as hard as he could. He caught it, too, just as it ran out of doors,

and gave it such a kick, that piggie lay for dead on the spot. Then all at once he remembered he had the tap in his hand; but when he got down to the cellar, every drop of ale had run out of the cask.

Then he went into the dairy and found enough cream left to fill the churn again, and so he began to churn, for butter they must have for dinner. When he had churned a bit, he remembered that their milking-cow was shut up in the cow-house, and had not had a bit to eat or a drop to drink all the morning, though the sun was high. Then all at once he thought it was too far to take her down to the meadow, so he would just get her up on the house-top—for the house, you must know, was thatched with sods, and a fine crop of grass was growing there. Now their house lay close up against a steep down, and he thought if he laid a plank across to the thatch at the back, he'd easily get the cow up.

But still he couldn't leave the churn, for there was his little babe crawling on the floor; 'and if I leave it,' he thought, 'the child is sure to upset it.' So he took the churn on his back, and went out with it; but then he thought he had better first water the cow before he turned her out on the thatch; so he took up a bucket to draw water out of the well; but, as he stooped down at the well's brink, all the cream ran out of the churn over his shoulders, and so down into the well.

Now, it was near dinner-time, and he hadn't even got the butter yet; so he thought he had best boil the porridge, and he filled the pot with water, and hung it over the fire. When he had done that, he thought the cow might perhaps fall off the thatch and break her legs or her neck. So he got up on the house to tie her up. One end of the rope he made fast to the cow's neck, and the

other he slipped down the chimney, and tied round his own thigh ; and he had to make haste, for the water now began to boil in the pot, and he had still to grind the oatmeal.

So he began to grind away ; but while he was hard at it, down fell the cow off the house-top after all, and as she fell she dragged the man up the chimney by the rope. There he stuck fast ; and as for the cow, she hung half-way down between heaven and earth—for she could neither get down nor up.

And now the goody had waited seven lengths and seven breadths for her husband to come and call them home to dinner, but never a call they had. At last, she thought she had waited long enough, and went home. But when she got there and saw the cow hanging in such an ugly place, she ran up and cut the rope in two with her scythe. But as she did this, down came her husband out of the chimney ; and so, when his old dame came inside the kitchen, there she found him standing on his head in the porridge-pot.*

* This lesson is very simple, and will form a good revision exercise in dictation.





THE GENTLE SAVAGE.

[Spell and write]

carefully, connected, dangerous, destruction, difficulty.

I am going to **tell** you **one** of Old Tom's stories. Old Tom was the **oldest** man **in** our village when I was a boy; indeed, I thought him **the** oldest man anywhere, his face was so brown **and** wrinkled, and he hobbled so feebly on his wooden leg. His eyes were bright though,

and his stiff curls—thin long curls just behind each ear—were as carefully twisted as if they were still black and glossy. He had ear-rings in his ears, which I always connected with a story of savages, perhaps because that was the first story I ever heard him tell; and I was looking at his ears all the time he was telling it. The story was this, as nearly as I can recollect:

‘When I was a young fellow of twenty, I was on board a merchant vessel that was going to carry a young man out to the West India. He had an uncle there, a very wealthy man, and this young Mr Standman was going to join him. He was about my age; but as far as I could learn, he thought of nothing but money and growing rich. I had been out to those parts before, so he would often come and talk to me about them, and ask how a fortune could be made, and what slaves were worth, and such like. He made me describe his uncle’s place over and over again, till I was tired of it; and when I heard he was going to marry the old merchant’s daughter and only child, I thought it must be her wealth and not her he wanted. However, that was not my business.

‘We were expecting to reach our port in a week or so, when a storm came on. I have seen a good many storms, but I never saw a worse storm than that. Three days it lasted, and on the night of the third we were drifted on to a dangerous shore, and the ship struck against a rock. How the waves leaped up round her, while we all hurried on deck! and, some in boats, and some on planks, and some too frightened to wait for anything, but leaping as they were into the water, we tried to make for the shore. It was not far distant; but the surf ran very high, and many a poor fellow was swept back by it into the dark waves.

‘When the first glimmer of day came, I, who had reached shore I hardly know how—for I can only remember that I dashed on blinded and breathless, now clinging to a rock, now forced back into the sea, now clutching the shore again—beheld the sea stretching out before me, smiling and calm, not a trace of life upon her, only the bow of the vessel visible among the huge rocks that had been her destruction. Then I looked round me on the shore, and not far off I saw what seemed a dead body. I went up to it on my hands and knees. It was Mr Standman; he was not dead, but he was senseless. With much difficulty—for I was very weak—I dragged him into the shelter of some trees, and hid him among the low brushwood that grew at their roots. Then I went in search of water, and had just brought him to his senses, when I heard a cry such as I had never heard before. I knew in a moment that it could not be any wild beast, that it must be the cry of savages, and my first feeling was a wish that I had died in the sea.

[*Write from dictation*]

With difficulty we kept the ship afloat, our position was most dangerous, and we were on the verge of destruction. On the day after the wreck I dragged my comrade into the shelter of some trees, and went in search of water.

THE GENTLE SAVAGE—*continued*.

[*Spell and write*]

companion, instantly, comrades, concealed, deceived, received, perceived, believed, relieved, neighbouring.

‘My companion was startled too, but I put my hand on his mouth, and, stooping down, whispered: “Savages!” He fainted away again instantly, and I thought it, on the

whole, the best thing he could do. I moved the leaves softly, and peered through them, and there I saw a band of some fifty dark-brown fellows, with bright-coloured blankets round them, and feathers in their hair, going down to the shore. They had, no doubt, seen the poor ship lying there, and had come down for plunder. I only hoped they would be content with that, and not look for victims; but there was a broad mark on the shore and into the brushwood, where I had dragged my young merchant, and they must soon find it out. How helpless I felt hiding there! As long as a man can fight for his life, he does not know what fear is, though death may look straight into his eyes; but when he has to sit still and wait for it, do you know what he does then, boys? Why, he prays as he never prayed before. I know I did then, and it was the old words—the old church words came back to me—"from murder and from sudden death"—I knew what they meant then.

'Well, as I watched, I saw them all go down to the shore, and then the rocks hid them; and then I could see them again. They had all taken to their boats, and were out on the sea paddling round and round the dear old ship, to try what they could find, no doubt. I was so busy watching them, that I never heard a sound till a bough touched me; and then I looked up, and there stood a woman, a savage woman, with her blanket over her, and her bare arms covered with clumsy bracelets. She wasn't looking at me, but at my comrade, and there was a look in her eyes that made me hope. They looked as if she could cry, only she *would* not. She did not seem very young, and she was not very handsome; but she looked gentle, and like a woman. I thought I would see what could be done, so I put my head down on the

ground at her feet, as if I would be her slave, and then raising it, looked at her, pointed to the savages, and then to my companion. She turned her head, stood as if thinking, then made me a sign to follow her, and led the way by a narrow path to a large cave—the mouth of which was overhung with creeping plants; she pulled them aside, and I saw it was dry and large—how large, I could not tell. She then turned back to Mr Standman, who opened his eyes, and shewed other signs of coming to life. “Don’t speak,” I said; “but rouse yourself, or you will be murdered. I have found a hiding-place, and this good lady”—I said lady, as if she could understand what I said—“will be a friend to us.” He looked at her, got up, fell on his knees before her, kissed her feet, her blanket, her hands. I never saw a man go on as he did. She looked pleased, as a mother might look at a son; and she took his hand, and led him away. He was very weak, indeed, and leaned heavily on us both; but we placed him in the cave at last, on a bed of leaves. Still, I wasn’t quite happy. I feared the savages might find us, by the trace on the shore and in the brushwood. How was this to be concealed? I went back with Yarico—for so I called her, as the most out-of-the-way name I knew—and pointed to the marks I had made in dragging the young man into the wood. She started for a moment, then ran quickly down to the shore. I watched her, and saw her draw from among the rocks the body of one of my poor comrades. This, with no little difficulty, she dragged to the place from which I had started, then on to the spot where I stood waiting for her. I saw in a moment that she meant in this way to deceive the savages, for she signed me to go back, and seated herself beside the dead body. I went

away to the cave, and, listening, heard the return of the savage band ; and, after a time, the sound of them among the brushwood, where they found Yarico seated as I left her, and, supposing the trail had been made by her, searched no further. They made a great talking for a time, then went off, their voices and shrill cries dying away in the woods. You may suppose that my comrade and I were thankful enough. We never stirred till nightfall ; then I ventured to the mouth of our hiding-place, and found fruit lying there, and cakes made of Indian corn. These revived us greatly, and though we did not sleep that night, we did so the next day to pass away the time, for we dared not stir out lest we should meet our terrible foes.

‘For three days we lay hidden there, finding food and water every night, but seeing no one. Then again came the horrid cry, and the band passed near enough for us to hear their voices ; but this time they went off in their boats, as far as we could make out, to some neighbouring isle, for Yarico came openly to the cave that night, led us down to the shore, and tried by signs to make us understand we were safe. She was very kind—she fed my comrade with her own hand, picking out all the finest fruit for him. She made his bed of leaves herself, and spread it with a gay blanket she had brought. No mother could have been kinder to her son ; and I thought from the first, she must have lost a son of her own ; and it was the look of Mr Standman, as he lay there as if dead, that woke up the mother’s love in her heart. For my part, I felt we owed our lives to her twice over, for she saved us first, and then kept us from starving ; and Mr Standman would talk by the hour of what he would do for her, if she would go with him when we escaped ; for, you may be

sure, we meant to escape, and our talk was chiefly of how we were to do it. One day I shewed Yarico a flag I had made with a handkerchief, and fastened to a stick ; and, by signs, asked her leave to fix it on the rocks. This I meant as a signal to any passing ship. She clearly understood, for the tears came in her eyes ; but Mr Standman made her signs that she should go too, and she was comforted.

[*Write from dictation*]

I believed that I had safely concealed my companion in the neighbouring brushwood ; but the savage was not deceived, She, however, understood the case at once, and instantly helped us to find a more secure retreat.

THE GENTLE SAVAGE—*concluded.*

[*Spell and write*]

persuaded, unhappy, civilised, business, angrily, villain, gentleman;

‘It was only three days after this that we were sitting in our cave, and Yarico beside us, trying to learn some words of English, when we heard a loud “Holloa,” and knew in a moment it was an English voice, sweeter to us than the sweetest music.’ We found a ship had passed, had seen our flag, and sent a boat to shore. In a quarter of an hour, we were on board—Yarico with us. She seemed unwilling to come ; but Mr Standman persuaded her. She stood all the time the shore was in sight, with her eyes sadly fixed on it, as if she were sorry to leave it. I said to the young merchant : “Why persuade her to come ; she will be unhappy in a civilised country ?”

“Attend to your own business,” said he ; “she will be my present to my bride.”

“A slave!” I said angrily; “a just reward for all she has done! I’ll not see her made a slave.”

Well, to make a long story short, we landed at last at the island; but before going to seek his uncle, the young man, whose heart was hardened with lust for gold, tried to find some one who would buy Yarico. He found an old gentleman, who offered a good price for her; and never shall I forget the look she gave him when she found he had sold her for money. The black-hearted villain slunk away under it; and I—— Well, boys, I’m not given to tears, but I cried like a child; and when the old gentleman saw it, he would know the reason. I told him all the story; and he would have cried too, but he was in too great a passion. And who do you think the old gentleman was? Why, the uncle of Mr Standman himself! and when he found this man was his nephew—the man he was going to give his daughter to—he made a vow that he should never set foot within his doors, and never have his child for his wife. Yarico and I went home with him; and the tale had to be told again to the young lady, who looked anything but sorry to hear she was not to marry her cousin, for she wished to marry some one else. It was pretty to see how she wiped Yarico’s eyes, and comforted her, putting her in a bed in her own room, as I heard, and watching beside her till she was asleep.

‘I went back to that place five years after, boys, and I saw the young lady, a wife and a mother. She was there, and Yarico was with her, looking quite happy. The young lady’s eldest boy was almost always with the poor woman, and she loved him and watched him as if he had been her own son. As for Mr Standman, he was a clerk in some planter’s office, and his uncle had never seen or noticed him; and when I heard that, what I said was:

"Serve him right, too !" and I daresay, boys, you will say the same.'

That we did, and we gave three cheers for Old Tom, and three for Yarico, before we went home.

[*Write from dictation*]

I felt that a savage might be unhappy in civilised life ; and I proposed that she should not be taken with us. I angrily heard the proposal to sell our best friend as a slave. The old gentleman, also, was angry. He made a vow that his nephew never should set his foot within his door, and never have his daughter for his wife.

ROBIN HOOD AND ALLIN A DALE.

1.

Come listen to me, you gallants so free,
All you that love mirth for to hear,
And I will tell you of a bold outlaw
That lived in Nottinghamshire.

2.

As Robin Hood in the forest stood
All under the greenwood tree,
There he was aware of a brave young man
As fine as fine might be.

3.

The youngster was clothed in scarlet red,
In scarlet fine and gay ;
And he did frisk it over the plain,
And chanted a roundelay.

4.

As Robin Hood next morning stood
Amongst the leaves so gay,
There did he espy the same young man,
Come drooping along the way.

5.

The scarlet he wore the day before
It was clean cast away ;
And at every step he fetched a sigh,
' Alack and a well-a-day !'

6.

Then stepped forth brave Little John,
And Midge, the miller's son,
Which made the young man bend his bow,
When as he saw them come.

7.

'Stand off, stand off !' the young man said,
'What is your will with me ?'
'You must come before our master straight,
Under yon greenwood tree.'

8.

And when he came bold Robin before,
Robin asked him courteously,
'Oh, hast thou any money to spare
For my merry men and me ?'

9.

'I have no money,' the young man said,
'But five shillings and a ring ;
And that I have kept this seven long years,
To have it at my wedding.

10.

‘Yesterday I should have married a maid,
But she soon from me was tane,
And chosen to be an old knight’s delight,
Whereby my poor heart is slain.’

11.

‘What is thy name?’ then said Robin Hood,
‘Come tell me without any fail :’
‘By the faith of my body,’ then said the young man,
‘My name it is Allin a Dale.’

12.

‘What wilt thou give me?’ said Robin Hood,
‘In ready gold or fee,
To help thee to thy true love again,
And deliver her unto thee?’

13.

‘I have no money,’ then quoth the young man,
‘No ready gold nor fee,
But I will swear upon a book
Thy true servant for to be.’

14.

‘How many miles is it to thy true love?
Come tell me without guile :’
‘By the faith of my body,’ then said the young man,
‘It is but five little mile.’

15.

Then Robin he hasted over the plain,
He did neither stint nor lin,
Until he came unto the church,
Where Allin should keep his wedding.

16.

‘What hast thou here?’ the bishop then said,
‘I prithee now tell unto me:’
‘I am a bold harper,’ quoth Robin Hood,
‘And the best in the north country.’

17.

‘O welcome, O welcome,’ the bishop he said,
‘That music best pleaseth me;’
‘You shall have no music,’ quoth Robin Hood,
‘Till the bride and the bridegroom I see.’

18.

With that came in a wealthy knight,
Which was both grave and old,
And after him a finikin lass,
Did shine like the glistening gold.

19.

‘This is not a fit match,’ quoth bold Robin Hood,
‘That you do seem to make here,
For since we are come into the church,
The bride shall choose her own dear.’

20.

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,
And blew blasts two or three;
When four-and-twenty bowmen bold
Came leaping over the lea.

21.

And when they came into the churchyard,
Marching all on a row,
The very first man was Allin a Dale,
To give bold Robin his bow.

22.

‘This is thy true love,’ Robin he said,
‘Young Allin as I hear say ;
And you shall be married at this same time,
Before we depart away.’

* * * * *

23.

‘Who giveth this maid?’ said Little John ;
Quoth Robin Hood, ‘That do I,
And he that takes her from Allin a Dale,
Full dearly he shall her buy.’

24.

And thus having ended this merry wedding,
The bride looked like a queen ;
And so they returned to the merry greenwood,
Amongst the leaves so green.





LETTER ABOUT A PARROT.

[Spell and write]

recollect, premising, extraordinary, impossible, especially, gradually, mischievous, imitates, naturally, ludicrous, acquainted.

As you wished me to write down whatever I could collect about my sister's wonderful parrot, I proceed to do so, only premising that I will tell you nothing but what I can vouch for having myself heard. Her laugh is quite extraordinary, and it is impossible to help joining in it one's self, more especially when, in the midst of it, she cries out: 'Don't make me laugh so; I

shall die, I shall die !' and then continues laughing more than before. Her crying and sobbing are curious ; and if you say : ' Poor Poll, what is the matter ?' she says : ' So bad, so bad ; got such a cold !' and after crying for some time, she will gradually cease, and making a noise like drawing a long breath, say : ' Better now !' and begin to laugh.

The first time I ever heard her speak was one day when I was talking to the maid at the bottom of the stairs, and heard what I then thought to be a child call out : ' Payne (the maid's name), I am not well, I am not well !' and on my saying : ' What is the matter with that child ?' she replied : ' It is only the parrot ; she always does so when I leave her alone, to make me come back ;' and so it proved, for on her going into the room, the parrot stopped, and then began laughing quite in a jeering way.

It is singular, that whenever she is affronted in any way, she begins to cry ; and when pleased, to laugh. If any one happens to cough or sneeze, she says : ' What a bad cold !' One day, when the children were playing with her, the maid came into the room ; and on their repeating to her several things which the parrot had said, Poll looked up, and said quite plainly : ' No, I didn't.' Sometimes when she is inclined to be mischievous, the maid threatens to beat her, and she often says : ' No, you won't.' She calls the cat very plainly, ' Puss, puss ;' and then answers, ' Mew ;' but the most amusing part is, that whenever I want to make her call it, and to that purpose say Puss, puss myself, she always answers : ' Mew,' till I begin mewing, and then she begins calling ' Puss' as quick as possible. She imitates every kind of noise, and barks so naturally, that I have known her to set all

the dogs on the parade at Hampton Court barking ; and I daresay, if the truth were known, wondering what was barking at them. And the alarm I have seen her cause in a party of cocks and hens, by her crowing and chuckling, has been the most ludicrous thing possible. She sings just like a child ; and I have more than once thought it was a human being ; and it is most ridiculous to hear her make what we should call a false note, and then say : ‘ Oh, la ! ’ and burst out laughing at herself—beginning again quite in another key. She is very fond of singing ‘ Buy a Broom,’ which she says quite plainly ; but in the same spirit as in calling the cat, if we say, with a view to make her repeat it—‘ Buy a broom,’ she always says, ‘ Buy a brush,’ and then laughs as a child might do when mischievous. She often performs a kind of exercise, which I do not know how to describe, except by saying that it is like the lance-exercise. She puts her claw behind her, first on one side and then on the other, then in front, and round over her head ; and whilst doing so, keeps saying : ‘ Come on, come on ! ’ and when finished, says : ‘ Bravo, beautiful ! ’ and draws herself up. Before I was as well acquainted with her as I am now, she would stare in my face for some time, and then say : ‘ How d’ye do, ma’am ? ’ This she always does to strangers. One day I went into the room where she was, and said, to try her : ‘ Poll, where is Payne gone ? ’ and to my astonishment and almost dismay, she said : ‘ Down stairs.’

[*Write from dictation*]

I recollect some of the extraordinary and ludicrous sayings and doings of my sister’s wonderful parrot, which was in the habit of doing mischievous as well as amusing things, as you shall hear. It is impossible for any one not acquainted with the bird to conceive how naturally she imitated human sounds.



THE FIRST EXPLOIT OF A GREAT WARRIOR.

[*Spell and write*]

spectators, erected, delightful, tournament, assured, incorrigible, prodigal, cavalier, uncourteous, equipped.

Scene.—A public square in Rennes—the houses hung with flags, and the windows full of spectators. Benches are erected all round the square. The family of Du Guesclin may be seen on a balcony.

Persons present.—The Countess du Guesclin, and the Count; their sons Oliver and John, the Housekeeper, Bertrand's Nurse, and afterwards Bertrand himself.

Oliver. Oh, mother! how delightful; the tournament is just about to begin.

John. Look, there is my father on his white horse.

Bertrand's Nurse [*Addressing the countess*]. How my poor Bertrand would have enjoyed all this! But you have deprived him of this pleasure. Oh, madam, you are too severe. Forgive him, my mistress, and let him see this tournament, and he will alter his conduct.

The Countess. My good nurse, you judge harshly a mother's heart. I should too gladly see my prodigal son again, but others have assured me that he is incorrigible.

The Housekeeper. Yes; you will never get anything from him by kindness.

The Countess. When I think of what he must be suffering, I would willingly pardon him.

The Housekeeper. There is no time now; the tournament begins.

*The Herald*s. The tournament is opened. Sound trumpets! Display the banners!

John. See, my father advances among the first.

Oliver. And my uncle, La Motte. He stands on our father's side.

The Housekeeper. Who is the young cavalier who has just leaped over the barrier?

Oliver. How badly he is equipped!

John. What a wretched horse he rides; I think it is only a farm-horse.

Several voices in the crowd. Turn that rude cavalier out of the lists.

Bertrand [*Mounted on a wretched horse, and very badly armed*]. I go out! No, they shall never disgrace me so! [*To himself*]. My uncle, La Motte, I know, is good-hearted. He will have pity on me. I shall make myself known to him.

The Crowd. Turn him out! turn him out!

Bertrand [*Going up to his uncle, La Motte*]. Noble cavalier !

La Motte. What ! *you*, Bertrand ?

Bertrand. Yes, good uncle ; I could not resist it. I escaped through a window.

La Motte. What ! at the risk of your life ?

Bertrand. What matters life ? It is glory that I must have. You see that they want to turn me out—uncle : give me one of your horses, and proper armour. Bear in mind that a Du Guesclin ought not to leave a tournament without breaking a lance with honour.

La Motte. But you are not known.

Bertrand. That may be ! But they will know me before the day is over.

La Motte. Come ! let it be as this youth desires—arm him.

Bertrand. Thanks, thanks !

The Count [*Approaching La Motte*]. Who is that combatant, pray ?

La Motte. I know not ; but he has a valiant air, and I have just ordered armour for him.

[*Write from dictation*]

The delighted spectators were assembled to witness the tournament, and to their surprise the prodigal and incorrigible boy was the same person as the uncourteous cavalier, who, though despised at first, was, when well equipped, admired by all.

THE FIRST EXPLOIT OF A GREAT WARRIOR—
concluded.

[*Spell and write*]

brilliantly, conqueror, desperate, encounter, overthrow, adversary,
deign, remembrance.

[*Bertrand re-appears, brilliantly armed.*]

The Crowd. Bravo ! bravo !

The Herald. Close the barrier—the tournament begins.

Bertrand [*To himself*]. Oh, may I be conqueror !

La Motte. What a desperate fellow ; see how he
tackles the bravest !

The Countess [*Who with her family has her eyes fixed
on Bertrand*]. What daring !

The Nurse. Madam, it is the same cavalier who
entered the lists so poorly armed.

Oliver. What blows he gives with his lance !

John. How beautiful he looks now ; how well he
uses his arms !

The Housekeeper. He does not wish to be known ;
for he keeps his vizor close down over his face.

La Motte. Courage, my brave unknown ! bravo,
bravo !

[*Bertrand overthrows the cavalier with whom he fights.*]
Glory to the victor ! let him raise his vizor, and salute the
ladies.

The Heralds. No ; this young cavalier wishes to fight
again, and without shewing his face.

The Crowd. Let him fight ! let him fight !

La Motte [*Aside*]. How I burn to take my nephew to
my arms !

The Count. I have never seen a better lance than this.

Bertrand [*Recognising his father*]. What voice is this? Yes, it is he—my father. I know him by his shield. I must keep clear of him till the tournament is ended, and yet I fear I cannot.

The Count. I would fain break a lance with you, young cavalier!

La Motte. Excuse him; he is wounded, I fear.

The Count. No cavalier ought to refuse the combat while he is still on his horse. I defy him! I attack him; he *must* meet me. [*He pursues Bertrand, who flies from him.*]

Bertrand [*To himself*]. No, no, I cannot fight with my own father.

The Crowd. If he refuse the combat, shame on him!

Bertrand. Yes, I refuse it.

The Crowd. Shame! shame!

La Motte. He has just shewn you how valiant he is.

Bertrand. And I will shew it again! Cavalier, defend yourself. [*He attacks a cavalier who enters the lists.*]

The Count. Why, then, does he refuse to encounter me?

La Motte. We shall know when he makes himself known.

Bertrand. Surrender, cavalier! [*He overthrows his adversary.*]

The Crowd. Honour, honour to the unknown!

The Countess. Yes, yes! let him receive the prize.

Bertrand. Oh! my mother, too, applauds me without knowing who I am. I shall go and raise my vizor to her. How glad I shall be if she pardons me! [*He goes up to the bench on which the countess sits; the count and La Motte following; he bows, and says:*] Noble countess,

it is for you I have fought ; deign to look on me with an eye of favour.

The Countess. My son Bertrand !

The Nurse. My poor Bertrand !

The Countess. Come and let me embrace you, my son !

La Motte. He will be the glory of your race, count.

The Nurse. And the glory of France.

All. That he will !

Bertrand. My good mother ; forgive me for having vexed you.

The Countess. You are forgiven, my boy !

The Herald. The prize of the tournament is BERTRAND DU GUESCLIN'S !

The Count [*Embracing his son*]. Be ever valiant, my boy ! Honour thy king and fear thy God.

[*Write from dictation*]

The youthful warrior, brilliantly armed, was the conqueror in more than one desperate encounter, overthrowing his adversary on every occasion.

THE HARE AND THE HOUND.

A hound having put up a hare from a bush, chased her some distance ; but the hare had the best of it, and got off. A goatherd, who was coming by, jeered at the hound, saying that puss was the better runner of the two. ' You forget,' replied the hound, ' that it is one thing to be running for your dinner, and another thing to run for your life.'

[*Write this fable from dictation.*]

THE WIND AND THE SUN.

[Spell and write]

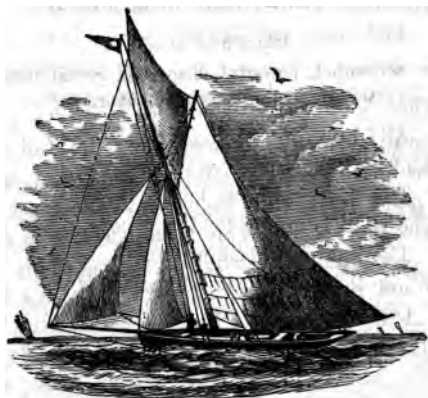
traveller, accounted, powerful, dispersed, genial, persuasion,
threatening, blustering, authority.

A dispute once arose between the wind and the sun, which was the stronger of the two, and they agreed to put the point upon this issue, that whichever soonest made a traveller take off his cloak, should be accounted the more powerful. The wind began and blew, with all his might and main, a blast, cold and fierce as a Thracian storm; but the stronger he blew, the closer the traveller wrapped his cloak around him, and the tighter he grasped it with his hands. Then broke out the sun; with his welcome beams he dispersed the vapour and the cold; the traveller felt the genial warmth, and as the sun shone brighter and brighter, he sat down, overpowered with the heat, and cast his cloak on the ground.

Thus the sun was declared the conqueror; and it has ever been deemed that persuasion is better than force; and that the sunshine of a kind and gentle manner will sooner lay open a man's heart, than all the threatenings and force of blustering authority.

[Write from dictation]

He who could first force the traveller to take off his cloak, was to be accounted the more powerful, and it turned out that persuasion was better than force, and the sunshine of a kind and gentle manner, better than all the threatenings of blustering authority.



A WET SHEET AND A FLOWING SEA.

1.

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast,
And fills the white and rustling sail,
And bends the gallant mast ;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While, like the eagle free,
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

2.

‘ Oh, for a soft and gentle wind ! ’
I heard a fair one cry ;
But give to me the stormy breeze,
And white waves heaving high ;

And white waves heaving high, my boys,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

3.

There's tempest in yon hornéd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud ;
And hark the music, mariners,
The wind is piping loud ;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashing free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

ROBERT FENTON.*

'I wish I was big, and could help you, mother, that you need not work so hard,' said Robert Fenton.

'You can help me, my dear boy,' answered his mother.

Robert's mother was a widow, and had to work very hard to support her four children, of whom Robert was the eldest. He was ten years old, and had hitherto been able to go to school ; but now, when his father was dead, his mother would perhaps wish him to give up school, that he might be able to earn a few pence daily. As Robert went to school that morning, he thought over his mother's words. How often, when his father had been alive, had Bob thought it tiresome to be obliged to go to

* The words in this lesson are so easy, that no spelling lesson is required.

school! He had looked at the bright poppies in the field, and had wished he might be allowed to linger there, to hear the birds sing, and watch the butterflies. He had wished to be like the clear little brook, that he might wander on and on, he knew not where; but now, when there was a chance of getting free from going to school, Robert felt sorry. 'What could mother mean when she said I could help her now?' thought he. 'Did she wish me to give up school to work in the field?' And as Robert went along thinking, he met Dick, a neighbour's son, who was going to pick potatoes in the field. 'I would not like to be like Dick,' thought he; 'he can neither read nor write, and keeps bad company. If I could get something to do after school—that mother could let me go to school one year longer, I would learn with all my might.' Poor Robert! it was early in life to begin with cares and troubles, but Bob was a fine manly fellow, who would not sit down with his hands before him, when he knew he ought to work. His teacher had said: 'If God puts you in a place where you must live by the work of your hands, you may be sure that is the very thing that is good for you.' And Bob knew that his teacher was right; he had found out already how pleasant it is to feel you are useful, when he had mended the wall of his mother's little garden, or helped her in the field; but it brought in no money, and Robert knew that his mother must pay the rent, and how should he manage to help her in that.' At last a bright thought seemed to strike him. 'I know what I will do,' said he aloud, as he leaned against the low wall of a garden. 'Farmer Bennet is a good man. I will go and tell him all about my trouble, and if he can give me anything to do after school-hours, I am sure he will do so.'

‘So I will, my little man,’ said Farmer Bennet, who had heard the boy’s words. He had been bending down to tie up a rosebush, and had listened to Robert’s words. He now asked him to tell him his request, and promised to grant it if the schoolmaster gave a good report of him. Robert was not at all afraid that he would not, for he was one of the best boys in the school.

Farmer Bennet was as good as his word. He gave the little fellow only such work as he could do without overtasking his strength, and as Robert made good progress at school, he made him afterwards keep his books for him. Robert felt very proud and happy at this mark of confidence, and you may be sure he did his best to deserve Farmer Bennet’s kindness. But the best of all was, that he could give his mother the help he had wished, even before he had become a man. He always kept the same rule for himself with which he began. When he knew that he ought to do a thing, he thought first about the way he could do it, and then set to work with all his heart; and as he never forgot to ask God’s blessing for all he did, he was successful in almost everything he undertook.

[Write from dictation the last two sentences.]



HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE.*

One after another fell, the bravest and best of the Trojan warriors, until at last Helenos spake to Hector, and said: 'O brother, the Achæans are pressing us hard, and the gods favour not the Trojans; what, then, shall we do if they come not to our aid in the hour of need? Hasten, then, into the city, and gather the women together, and bid them go to the temple of Athênê, and there beseech her with gifts and prayers, that she may help the Trojans against the fierce Diomedes, and the other chieftains who fight in the hosts of Agamemnon.' Then Hector answered and said: 'I will do thy bidding, my brother; but oh, ye men of Troy, let not your hearts be cast down while I go to the sacred Ilion, and bid our matrons pray to the virgin daughter of Zeus to aid us in our need. It may be that she will hear our prayer; but if she hearken not, be not dismayed, for one good omen not even the gods can take away from men, when they fight for their home and the land in which they were born.'

So Hector hastened to the house of Priam. Very fair it was to look at in the bright sunshine, which streamed into the golden chambers. Then from the rich hall, where the king held banquet with his chieftains, came forth the lady Hecabê; and when Hector came near to her, she took him by the hand, and called him by his name,

* The easy style of this lesson compensates for the difficulty of the proper names. As much as possible of this simple narrative-writing should be copied out by the pupil, if it be not convenient to write it from dictation.

and spoke in a soft flowing voice : ' Oh, my son, wherefore comest thou hither from the battle-field ? Tarry yet a little while, and I will bring thee wine to gladden thy fainting heart.'

But Hector said : ' Stay me not, O mother, for I have a great work to do ; and if I tarry now by thy side, my heart may lose its strength, and my arm may fail me in the strife.'

So Hecabé parted from her child. Quickly he sped to his house ; but the bridal-chamber was desolate, and he heard not the voice of Andromache among the maidens as they plied their tasks in the great hall. Then he said : ' Tell me, O maidens, is Andromache gone to the homes of her kinsfolk, or the shrine of the pure Athênê, where the Trojan matrons are seeking by gifts and prayers to win her favour ?'

Then one of them answered : ' O Hector ! if, indeed, I must tell thee the truth, she hath not gone to her kinsfolk, or to the temple of Athênê ; but she bade the nurse bring with her thy child, and she sped, like one on whom the hand of the gods lies heavy, to the high tower of Ilion, because she heard that the Trojans were hard pressed by the fierce Diomedes, and all the chieftains of the Achæans.'

Then Hector tarried not to listen to more words. By the way that he had come he hastened again to the gates ; and there, as she ran to meet him, she gave her nurse the child, whom the men of Troia called Astyanax, because of the great deeds of his father. Then he stood still and looked gently on his child, but he spake no word ; and Andromache took him by the hand, and, looking gently and fondly into his face, she said : ' O Hector, wilt thou hearken to my words ? Sure I am

that thine own brave heart will bring thee to thy ruin ; and well thou knowest that thy death brings shame and sorrow to me and to our child. Ah, would that with thee I could go down to the dark land of Hades ! for what hope have I when thou art gone ? The fierce Achilles in one day slew my father and my seven brethren ; yet did he no wrong to the body of Eetion, but he laid him gently in the earth, and raised a great mound above his grave, and the nymphs who dwell upon the mountains planted round it the clustering elm-trees. There, too, was my mother slain in the halls of her father. All are gone ; but, O Hector, in thee I have father, and mother, and husband, and brethren. Hearken, then, to my words, and abide with me on the tower, and let thy hosts stand beside the ancient fig-tree, where they say that the wall is weakest. And partly do I believe it, for why should there the Achæans make their fiercest onsets, if some one of the undying gods had not shewn them that there they may scale the wall, and that thou heedest not its weakness ?'

Then Hector strove to soothe Andromache, and said gently to her : ' I have cared for all these things already ; but ask me not to tarry here upon the wall, for never must the people say that Hector shrank from the battle-field. I must go forth to the fight, not as in the heedless days of youth, when men seek to win praise and glory, for my name is great already, and they call me the first among the warriors of Ilion. But well I know that we fight in vain, for the doom is fixed that the sacred Ilion shall fall, and Priam and his people shall be slain. But, more than all, I grieve for thee and for the sorrows that shall come upon thee when thou art carried away captive to some far-off land. There, at the bidding of

some Argive woman, thou shalt toil, and spin, and weave, and all who see thee weeping shall say: "Look at the wife of Hector, who was the bravest of all the warriors of Ilion!" and thy tears will be more bitter when thou hearest them speak my name, for the dark earth will be heavy above me in the land of Troia, and I shall be far away from thee in the dark kingdom of Hades.'

So he turned to the babe, who lay like a fair star in the arms of the nurse, and he stretched forth his arms to take him; but the child gazed fearfully at the long spear, and the brazen helmet, and the horse-hair plume which waved proudly above it, and he shrank back with a cry, and nestled in the folds of his nurse's robe. Then Hector laughed, and took the helmet from his head, and placed it on the ground, and the child feared no more to go to his father. Gently he took him in his arms, and he prayed aloud to Zeus and the undying gods, that they would bless his child, and make him glorious among his people, that so in time to come men might say: 'This man is stronger and braver than Hector.'

So he gave the child to Andromache, who received him smiling through her tears. The brave heart of Hector was moved with the sorrow of his wife, and he laid his hand gently on her, and called her by her name, and said: 'Grieve not overmuch, O my wife, for none shall lay Hector low before the day of his doom is come. That day no man can avoid, be he good or be he evil. So let me go forth to the battle, and I will take heed for the guarding of the city; and do thou hasten to thy home, and there ply thine own tasks, with thy hand-maidens around thee.'

Then from the ground he took up his burnished

helmet, and in grief and sorrow Andromache tore herself from his arms, and went slowly towards her home. Many a time she turned back to look upon him, but scarcely could she see the flashing of his armour, for the tears ran too quickly down her cheeks. So in silence and sadness of heart she entered her bridal-chamber, where she thought not to hear the voice of Hector again; and her handmaidens wept when they knew that once more he was gone forth to the fight, for they feared the wrath of Athênê, and the strength of the mighty Diomedes.

ROBIN REDBREAST.

1.

Good-bye, good-bye to summer !
For summer 's nearly done ;
The garden smiling faintly,
Cool breezes in the sun ;
Our thrushes now are silent,
Our swallows flown away—
But Robin 's here in coat of brown,
And scarlet breast-knot gay.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear !
Robin sings so sweetly
In the falling of the year.

2.

Bright yellow, red, and orange,
The leaves come down in hosts ;
The trees are Indian princes,
But soon they 'll turn to ghosts ;

The leathery pears and apples
Hang russet on the bough ;
It's autumn, autumn, autumn late,
'Twill soon be winter now.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear !
And what will this poor Robin do ?
For pinching days are near.

3

The fireside for the cricket,
The wheatstack for the mouse,
When trembling night-winds whistle
And moan all round the house.
The frosty ways like iron,
The branches plumed with snow—
Alas ! in winter dead and dark,
Where can poor Robin go ?
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear !
And a crumb of bread for Robin,
His little heart to cheer.

END OF SECOND PART.

PART THIRD.

TONY CARELESS.

[Spell and write]

extremity, establish, comfortably, education, industriously, annoyance, occupied, severity, endangered, preceding, promised, privations.

Mrs Gilbert was left a widow with four children when forty years of age. Though her husband had not left enough to enable her to establish her children, she had at least the means of living comfortably. Now, education is the fortune of poor youths; and accordingly, Mrs Gilbert subjected herself to severe privations that she might give a good education to her three sons. She had a brother who was much attached to his niece and his three nephews—indeed, the best of uncles.

The youngest boy was seven years old, and was called Tony. Amy was a sweet girl of twelve, and most useful to her mother. George and Julian, Tony's elder brothers, were placed at a good school, and knowing that their uncle paid for their education, they worked industriously.

One day this best of uncles found his sister somewhat vexed, and asked her the cause of her annoyance. Mrs Gilbert having no answer ready, the uncle quickly saw that she was thinking of her children. Now, Amy was well behaved, and the two boys at school had good marks. 'Is it my godson Tony you are thinking of?' asked the uncle. 'If you do not mend, sir,' he said, with feigned

severity, 'I shall make you a cabin-boy in a trading-vessel.'

Tony fled.

• 'What has he done?' asked the uncle of his sister.

'I cannot make up my mind to speak ill of my boy,' said Mrs Gilbert. 'He will no doubt improve when he sees how deeply his conduct grieves me. There is his tutor, ask him.'

The mother then left the room to find Tony; and he was led before his two judges.

Mr Brown, the tutor, a worthy old man, who kept a small boarding-school, then said to the good uncle: 'I have great fears, sir, that this child will never get on. Sometimes his head is bare—his cap is lost; at another time, his stockings are hanging over his heels. He will spend his whole life in looking for what he wants, when he ought to be off. When others have taken their places, he runs all out of breath to see his own already occupied. He spends his time looking for his book; and he begins to say his lesson when the others have finished. He turns the room into confusion to get his things; he has to eat his dinner cold; then he rushes across the stream and through the wood after his companions, but arrives too late. He has time for nothing. He is disgraced in presence of the school, and is an object of laughter. Faults not corrected at school become vices in the man. He is standing in the corner in disgrace, while his companions are at play; and he gets into the habit of being punished, and becomes hardened in vice. He has allowed himself to be named Tony Careless. It would be unfortunate if this name were to stick to him!'

'This is a serious matter,' said the uncle. 'I see now what it is that vexes Mrs Gilbert.'

‘He is good-natured, he does not tease, he is obliging—he is a very nice boy,’ said Amy; ‘and yet he is more scolded than any of us.’

A fortnight afterwards, on his return from a journey, the best of uncles, who had been absent in order to save a portion of his fortune, endangered by a bad man in whom he had put too much confidence, promised to his niece and nephews a day in the country, without fixing the date. The evening before the day on which the uncle was to come, Tony, worthy of his name, had taken good care not to put his shoes together when he went to bed, as careful children do, in order that they may be at hand in the morning. After hurling, for fun, one of his shoes to the other end of the room, he ascended the stairs, hopping on one leg.

On the following day, the hour strikes, Tony leaps out of bed, and having forgotten his fun of the preceding evening, he cannot find one of his shoes. So he roams about, turning the furniture upside down, he lies on his face to peep under sofas and beds, and dirties his shirt. Failing to find the shoe, he accuses his brothers of having concealed it; for a careless fellow admits his want of order only at the last extremity. It was so much the more unlucky, because his mother, after reproaching him for wasting his shoes, had ordered two pairs for him; and the tradesman, as is too common, had not brought them on the day he promised, so that, for the time, he was reduced to a single pair.

[Write from dictation the first paragraph of this story.]

TONY CARELESS—*concluded.**[Spell and write]*

exclamation, announced, excitement, appearance, coloured, unfortunate, satisfaction, amusement, excursion, vexation.

While Tony was calling the servant to come and help him, exclamations of joy announced the arrival of the best of uncles, and his pleasure-car rattled into the court. They were to breakfast at Richmond. 'Ah, now we shall have a sail, and shall see many fine things!'

Tony heard his sister and brothers calling one another, getting one a cap, and another a shawl. There was a regular family excitement—one of these excitements when everything is left in disorder, that not one moment of pleasure may be lost.

'And I can't find my shoe!' said Tony, whining with vexation.

He comes down stairs and sees his brothers all ready, with their shoes, hats, and gloves on, and everything about them clean and orderly, standing beside the pleasure-car. His sister, dressed gaily by her mother, was as grand as the horse, that had rose-knots on its ears.

'Where is Tony? Tony!'

Tony goes up again to his bedroom. He puts his one shoe sometimes on one foot, sometimes on the other, as if to make himself believe there are two, when there is only one. He sheds tears again. At last, buoyed up by the hope of touching his uncle's feelings, and those of his mother, and sister, and brothers, and to be taken with them as he is, he goes down stairs, forgetting the state he is in, and makes his appearance at the door, with dirty hands, torn shirt, half-combed hair, not dressed at all,

and flushed with despair. At the sight of him a cry is raised : ' Oh, Tony ! Tony ! '

' And he has only one shoe ! ' said the best of uncles, looking very grave.

' What have you done with your other shoe, my unfortunate child ? ' said his mother. ' Oh, Tony ! Tony ! ' she cried, much vexed.

' Look for it, can't you ? ' said George.

' Impossible to find it, ' said the servant, making her appearance.

' Oh ! ' said Julian, ' I have a pair of list-shoes, take them ! '

' No ! ' said the uncle. ' I give him five minutes more. If he is not ready then—drive on, coachman ! '

All then set themselves to hunt for the shoe ; but the shoe can nowhere be found. The dog was throwing himself about at the mouth of his kennel, barking. He seemed to share in the general excitement. While this last effort is being made, Tony attempts to move the best of uncles : ' I will be orderly ever after, ' he says. ' I will indeed put everything in its place, if you will only take me with you. '

But the uncle will not be moved. The nephew takes hold of him by the waistcoat, hangs by him. The uncle, feeling himself held tight by his nephew, makes a sign to the coachman, who takes hold of Tony, and transfers him to the care of the servant.

' Take care of him, ' said Mrs Gilbert. ' Stay—buy him a tart. '

And as she went out, the mother, sad at having only three of her children with her, heard the cries of Tony as the carriage drove off. Tony, I assure you, felt a fearful pang when he heard the noise of the carriage-wheels. When all was quiet, he looked into the street.

The street is deserted. Every one is gone to the country, and the passers-by seem all to be wending their way to Richmond. Tony goes to his bedroom, and murmurs to himself: 'I wish I had as much order as Julian!'

And, wonderful to say, he sets himself to arrange all his things—his books, his pencils, his colour-box, his coloured pictures, those still to be coloured, even his tattered books, which he makes look very well by his way of putting them on the shelf. Then he arranges his clothes, sets the bedroom to rights, and feels some of that pleasing satisfaction which order gives. When everything was arranged, he went into the lobby, and looked into the court. What does he see? His shoe!—his shoe in the mouth of the dog, who had doubtless concealed it in the straw of his kennel. Tony goes down stairs, and as he crosses the court, sees a bit of paper folded square. As he had begun to pride himself on his order, he picks it up, put it into his pocket, and then takes his shoe from the dog, scolding it the while. Then he returns to his bedroom, and takes to a book to pass his period of punishment. He was soon very weary; and, seeking for some new object of amusement, he looked to see if everything was in order. 'They are at Richmond by this time!' he said to himself.

In this state of mind, he saw a little kitten enter the room, as if drawn to him by some instinct, for he came in with a frisky air, as much as to say: 'Let us have a game together!' Tony took the paper he had in his pocket, made a ball of it, and tying a string to the ball, he drew it about as if it had been a mouse, and the kitten very gladly entered into the game. All went well; Tony and the kitten capered about, as if vying with each other who should caper best, when the noise of carriage-wheels was

heard; and Tony, looking out, saw the family all returning, evidently much excited.

‘Ah, ma’am,’ said the servant, ‘Tony has put everything in order.’

‘There was much need to do so,’ said the uncle.

‘Alas!’ said Mrs Gilbert, ‘my brother has lost a paper of the greatest importance. If he does not find it, he will lose about two thousand pounds. He had it here, and thinks that it must be about somewhere.’

Every one begins to look; and after half an hour spent in seeking, nothing is found.

‘Alas!’ said Mrs Gilbert, ‘why did we arrange for this pleasure-excursion? I am the cause of your loss.’

Tony, proud of his two shoes, comes down stairs with his ball of paper, and shews himself. On learning the cause of everybody’s distress, he said to his uncle: ‘Can this be it?’

The uncle, unfolding the ball, finds it to be the very paper he had lost. He kisses Tony, and says: ‘Come, we shall all of us go to Richmond! But if I take you with us, remember it is not so much for having taken care of this paper, as for having arranged your room, your books, and your clothes!’

Now—if you lend anything to Tony, he returns it to you clean, and without stains or rents. He is the first at school. Never losing his gloves, he is no longer troubled with chilblains. His mother does not need to spend so much on his account, for he takes care of what he has. In short, he is a changed boy.

[*Write from dictation*]

Excitement followed the exclamation of surprise which announced the arrival of the carriage; but it was evidently impossible to take poor Tony on the excursion, and he had to find what satisfaction and amusement he could in his coloured pictures.

THE USEFUL PLOUGH.

1.

A country life is sweet !
In moderate cold and heat,
To walk in the air, how pleasant and fair,
In every field of wheat.
The fairest of flowers adorning the bowers,
And every meadow's brow ;
So that I say, no courtier may
Compare with them who clothe in gray,
And follow the useful plough.

2.

They rise with the morning lark,
And labour till almost dark ;
Then folding their sheep, they hasten to sleep ;
While every pleasant park
Next morning is ringing with birds that are singing,
On each green, tender bough.
With what content and merriment,
Their days are spent, whose minds are bent
To follow the useful plough !



OLD WORLD STORIES.

THE STORY OF ST GEORGE OF ENGLAND,

ONE OF THE SEVEN CHAMPIONS OF CHRISTENDOM.

[Spell and write]

cruelly, patient, complaining, contrary, miserable, difficult, diligently, searched, alabaster, vineyards, magnificent.

St George, the patron saint of Merrie England, was carried off, says the story, when a child by a wicked fairy, who took him across the seas and shut him up in her strong cave in the midst of a dark forest. Here she kept him for many years, using him very cruelly; but the boy was patient, and learned to bear pain without complaining, so that the wicked fairy was in truth training him up to be a great man, and making him brave as a hero. Not content with being unkind to him herself, she ordered a dwarf, who also lived in the cave, to beat and tease the boy as much as he could. But St George would not revenge himself on the poor dwarf; on the contrary, he did him a kindness as often as he had the chance. At last, one day when the wicked fairy was absent, the dwarf said to the prince: 'Know, my good friend, that though I seem to you but a miserable dwarf, I am a fairy in disguise. It is true, I am not so powerful as the wicked fairy who keeps us here in prison; but wait patiently, I shall yet be able to set you free.' The young prince thanked the fairy, and his hopes were raised by her promise; but he had

yet many years to wait. These years were spent by the good dwarf in teaching the boy all princely knowledge—to ride and wield the sword and poise the lance. Thus it was that, when he was a man, there was no knight to be found equal to St George.

One day, the friendly dwarf spoke thus to the prince: 'Know, my prince, that our wicked enemy sleeps but once in a hundred years; but then she sleeps for a whole week. All her power depends on the silver wand she carries; but when she sleeps she hides this away so carefully, that it is difficult, indeed, to discover it. However, we must try, for this is our only chance of escape.' The young prince's heart beat high with hope as he heard these words, for he pined to escape from this dreary cavern. Day after day they followed the wicked fairy, to see where she would place the silver wand—in vain; for when at last she fell asleep, they could nowhere find it. High and low, the prince and the dwarf searched in every gloomy passage and dark corner of the cavern, but no silver wand was to be seen. The prince looked among her robes and her jewels, among her gold and silver, and her rich armour; no wand could he find. The days passed on, and still both searched, and still they searched in vain.

Five days had thus passed away; the sixth day came, and that, too, ended, and they had not found the wand: they became very anxious, and searched more diligently than ever, for on that day the bad fairy was to awake. As the prince passed along a winding dark passage of the cavern, he saw at the end, by the light of his torch, a golden door. With repeated blows he broke it open. A steep flight of rugged stone steps led winding upwards, he knew not where. Up he went, on and on;

sometimes the stair turned round and round, then it went straight on. Presently, a door would bar his way, and he forced it open; then a long, long passage would appear, and more stairs; but he never paused even to take breath; and his friend, the dwarf, was at his heels, and urged him on. At last the light of day burst upon him, and he found himself in a magnificent temple of alabaster, on the top of a lofty mountain. From the windows of this temple he could see many miles of lovely country—cities and fields, rivers and vineyards, quiet little villages, and noble castles.

[*Write from dictation*]

Though cruelly treated, they were, on the whole, patient, and instead of spending the time in useless complainings, they searched anxiously for the wand, and in their difficult search they reached a magnificent alabaster palace, from which they had a view of cities, and fields, and vineyards.

THE STORY OF ST GEORGE OF ENGLAND— *concluded.*

[*Spell and write*]

approaching, terrible, prisoners, innocent, adventures.

He was so delighted with all that he saw, that he forgot the silver wand and the wicked fairy; but the sound of a church bell rising up from the valley reminded him where he was, and that the hour was fast approaching when the terrible fairy would awake. He turned again to renew his search, when, on a velvet cushion lying on a marble table, he beheld the silver wand for which he had so long sought. He seized it at once.

‘Follow me,’ said the dwarf, hurrying back, ‘no time is to be lost.’ Down the steps they ran, faster and faster, half-leaping down a whole flight at a time. The bottom was reached at last, but the golden door had closed again. In vain they pushed and strove—it remained closely shut. At last the prince touched it with his silver wand. Instantly it flew open. Along the cavern they ran, and at last they reached the chamber where the fairy lay sleeping. She was just beginning to awake; her eyes were about to open. ‘Strike! strike!’ said the dwarf, and the prince struck the bed with his wand. The bed began to sink; down, down it went, amid fearful shrieks and cries; the room was filled with vapour, the cavern rocked, and when, at last, all was still, the prince found himself out in the thick forest, and by his side a charming fairy, who said to him with a smile: ‘You see I am no longer a dwarf.’ The prince was much pleased to see this, but when he turned to look for the cavern, it was nowhere to be seen.

The good fairy now led him away to a castle of brass, where lay other prisoners as unhappy as they had been. Here they found six noble champions with their squires, and they set them all free. They were the champions of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland; of France, and Italy, and Spain; and glad, indeed, were they to mount their horses and ride away in freedom. The fairy brought out a horse for St George, and this horse was called Bayard. Then she took him to a room in the castle, and chose him a suit of armour of the purest steel, and gave him a sword that would overcome in every fight. She bade him use his sword to defend his country, to punish the evil-doer, to protect the innocent; and with that she sent him forth. St George and the other knights rode

till they came to a wide plain, in the centre of which was a brazen pillar. Here seven roads met, and each of them choosing a different road, they parted company, and set forth in search of adventures.

[*Write from dictation*]

The hour approached, the terrible fairy was overcome, the champions were set free, and, parting company, they set forth in search of adventures, choosing different ways.

THE SEVEN CHAMPIONS OF CHRISTENDOM.

1.

The ancient chronicles of kings,
E'er since the world begun,
Can't boast of such renowned things
As these brave knights have done.

2.

St George he was for England,
St Denis was for France,
St James for Spain, his valiant hand
Did Christian fame advance.

3.

St Anthony for Italy,
Andrew for Scots ne'er fails,
Patrick stands for Ireland,
St David was for Wales.

THE PARROT.

A True Story.

1.

A parrot, from the Spanish main,
Full young and early caged, came o'er,
With bright wings, to the bleak domain
Of Mulla's shore.

2.

To spicy groves where he had won
His plumage of resplendent hue,
His native fruits, and skies, and sun,
He bade adieu.

3.

For these he changed the smoke of turf,
A heathery land and misty sky,
And turned on rocks and raging surf
His golden eye.

4.

But petted in our climate cold,
He lived and chattered many a day :
Until with age, from green and gold,
His wings grew gray.

5.

At last when blind, and seeming dumb,
He scolded, laughed, and spoke no more,
A Spanish stranger chanced to come
To Mulla's shore ;

6.

He hail'd the bird in Spanish speech,
The bird in Spanish speech replied ;
Flapped round the cage with joyous screech,
Dropped down, and died !



ST GEORGE AND THE DRAGON.

THE COMBAT.

[Spell and write]

devoured, oppressed, released, ravaging, satisfy, accordingly, infectious, annoyed, inhabitants, conquered, terrific, undaunted.

Many and wonderful adventures had the brave St George as he went on his travels, always mounted on his noble steed Bayard, and bearing his trusty sword in his hand. Once he found a king full of trouble because a fearful dragon was ravaging his country. So greedy was

this terrific monster that nothing would satisfy him but the body of a young maiden brought daily to his den. When he had devoured it he would remain quiet all day, but unless it was brought he would ravage the land on all sides. Many brave men had fought with him, but he had killed them all, and so many young maidens had been devoured by him, that now only the princess was left, and the next morning she must die.

When Prince George heard this he resolved to do battle with the dragon; and, accordingly, the next morning he arose and went in search of his fierce enemy. As he went he saw the princess led out to meet her sad fate, but he approached her and bade her return to her father's court, for he would deliver her from the dragon. Then he rode on to the valley where the dragon lived, and had a fierce battle with him. His spear broke short in the fight, and once he and the noble Bayard, his horse, were both overthrown; but they rose up again, and St George drew his faithful sword that never failed him, and at length pierced the dragon to the heart. He then returned to the city, where the king, as a reward, gave him the princess to be his wife. She was baptized, and went with him to England, where she bore him three sons.

It would fill a large book to tell of all that St George did in his lifetime; how often he drew his sword to defend the oppressed; how many poor prisoners he released; how many cruel giants and fierce bears he killed: I can only tell you that he never drew his sword in a bad cause, and that his faithful horse was always his companion. And now you must hear the manner of his death. He had been absent from England many years, and was returning home with much joy, when he was

told a 'doleful report, how there ranged up and down an infectious dragon, that so annoyed the country that the inhabitants thereof could not pass by without great danger.' Fifteen knights had lost their lives in doing combat with this dragon.

St George no sooner heard thereof than he resolved either to free the land from so great a danger, or to finish his days in the attempt. So taking leave of all present, he rode forth with a noble and undaunted courage.

Coming to the middle of the plain, he there saw his dreadful enemy crouching on the ground in a deep cave. The monster, knowing that his death drew nigh, made a fearful yelling that seemed to shake the earth. Then, bounding from his den, he ran with such fury against the knight as if he meant to devour him, and his armour, and his steed in a moment. But the brave St George, knowing well how to deal with such monsters, quickly wheeled his horse round out of his way. Then the dragon turned, and flapping his huge wings, flew again upon the knight and tried to overthrow him and his horse, but St George thrust his spear into his throat. At length, after a long combat, the good knight conquered this last time also, and the dragon lay dead upon the plain; but, alas! the sting in his tail had more than once pierced through the openings in St George's armour, so that he was bleeding from many wounds. Still he contrived to ride back to his native city of Coventry, where all the people came out to meet him as if he had been a king. But no sooner had he ridden into the city than he fell back fainting from his horse, and died without a sigh. The king and the people all mourned for him, and the day on which he was buried was named St George's Day. He was also raised to be the patron saint of

England—because he had lived a good and useful life, and had fought bravely in many a just cause.

And ever since this time, when Englishmen go forth to fight battles, they shout, ‘For England and St George;’ or ‘St George and Merrie England;’ and many a fight have they won to that old and honoured cry. You may find St George, too, on the back of some of our old coins—trampling the dragon under his feet; and whenever men put down a wrong thing in the land, when they overcome evil with good, whether in their own hearts, or in the country where they dwell, or out in the wide world, then they shew themselves true followers of St George, and true sons of Merrie England.

[Write from dictation]

St George and his companions shewed great courage in delivering the oppressed; and an infectious dragon ravaging the country and annoying the inhabitants, was slain by the Champion of England. Whenever men put down a wrong thing, and overcome evil with good, they are worthy followers of St George.

THE SPILT PEARLS.

1.

His courtiers of the caliph crave :

‘Oh, say how this may be,
That of thy slaves, this Ethiop slave
Is best beloved by thee ?

2.

‘For he is ugly as the night ;
And when has ever chose
A nightingale for its delight—
A hueless, scentless rose ?’

3.

The caliph then : ‘ No features fair,
Nor comely mien is his :
Love is the beauty he doth wear,
And love his glory is.

4.

‘ When once a camel of my train
Fell in a narrow street,
From broken casket rolled amain
Rich pearls before my feet.

5.

‘ I, winking to the slaves, that I
Would freely give them these ;
At once upon the spoil they fly,
The costly boon to seize.

6.

‘ One only at my side remained—
Beside this Ethiop none ;
He, moveless as the steed he reined,
Behind me sat alone.

7.

“ What will thy gain, good fellow, be,
Thus lingering at my side ? ”
“ My king, that I shall faithfully
Have guarded thee ! ” he cried.

8.

‘ True servant’s title he may wear,
He only who has not—
For his lord’s gifts, how rich so e’er—
His lord himself forgot.’

TRENCH.

ALNASCHAR'S DAY-DREAMS.

[Spell and write]

possessed, resolved, merchandise, attitude, satisfied, entertain, handsomely, represented, accompanied, generosity, continuing.

When Alnaschar's father died he left him twenty crowns of silver. Alnaschar, who had never possessed so large a sum of money before, resolved to lay it out in the purchase of glasses, bottles, and other glass articles. He put the whole of his stock into an open basket, and fixed upon a very small shop, where he sat down with the basket before him, and, leaning his back against the wall, waited for customers to buy his merchandise.

While he was remaining in this attitude, his eyes fixed upon his basket, he began to meditate aloud, and a tailor who was his neighbour, heard him speak thus: 'This basket cost me twenty crowns, and that is all I am worth in the world. In selling its contents, I shall do well if I make forty crowns, and of these forty, which I shall again invest in glass-ware, I shall make eighty crowns. By continuing this traffic I shall, in process of time, amass the sum of five hundred crowns. And as soon as I am worth a thousand, I will leave off selling glass-ware and turn jeweller. I will then deal in diamonds, pearls, and all sorts of precious stones. When I shall be in possession of as much wealth as I wish, I will purchase a beautiful large estate, slaves, and horses: I will entertain handsomely and largely, and make a noise in the world. Nor will I remain satisfied till I have gained a hundred thousand crowns. When I have become thus rich, I shall think myself equal to a prince, and I will send and

demand the daughter of the prime-minister in marriage. If he should be so ill-bred as to refuse her to me, though I know that will not be the case, I will go and take her away in spite of him. When I am married, I will dress myself like a prince, and will parade through the town, mounted on a fine horse, the saddle of which shall be of pure gold ; I will be accompanied by slaves, and will thus proceed to the palace of the minister with the eyes of all fixed upon me, both nobles and others. I will present my wife's father with two purses of gold, and after such an act, my generosity will be the conversation of the whole world.

‘ I will then return home, and when my wife comes to me, I will turn away my head and pretend not to see her. I will not answer her a word when she speaks, and I will thus begin, on the very first day of my marriage, to teach her how she may expect to be treated during the remainder of her life. She will come to me trembling, with tears in her eyes, and offer me a glass of wine with her own hand ; but I, without looking at or speaking to her, shall push her away with my foot.’

Here Alnaschar, entirely absorbed in his castle-building, represented the action with his foot as if it were a reality, and he unfortunately struck his basket of glass-ware so violently, that he sent it from one end of his shop into the street, where it was all broken to pieces.

[*Write from dictation*]

While he meditated in a lazy attitude regarding the future, he forgot the merchandise of which he was at present possessed, and kicked it violently into the street. To be accompanied by troops of servants, to entertain handsomely, and to be praised for generosity, was his absorbing dream ; the reality was a broken basket of glass, and poverty for the remainder of his life.

SIR LANCELOT DU LAKE.

1.

When Arthur first in court began,
And was approved king,
By force of arms great victories won
And conquest home did bring.

2.

Then into England straight he came,
With fifty good and able
Knights, that resorted unto him,
And were of his round table :

3.

And he had jousts and tournaments,
Whereto were many prest,
Wherein some knights did far excel
And eke surmount the rest.

4.

But one Sir Lancelot Du Lake,
Who was approved well,
He for his deeds and feats of arms
All others did excel.

5.

When he had rested him awhile,
In play, and game, and sport,
He said he would go prove himself
In some adventurous sort.

6.

He armed rode in a forest wide,
And met a damsel fair,
Who told him of adventures great,
Whereto he gave great ear.

7.

‘Such would I find,’ quoth Lancelot ;
‘For that cause came I hither.’
‘Thou seem’st,’ quoth she, ‘a knight full good,
And I will bring thee thither,

8.

‘Whereas a mighty knight doth dwell,
That now is of great fame :
Therefore tell me what wight thou art,
And what may be thy name.’

9.

‘My name is Lancelot du Lake.’
Quoth she, ‘It likes me than ;
Here dwells a knight who never was
Yet matched with any man :

10.

‘Who has in prison threescore knights
And four that he did wound ;
Knights of King Arthur’s court they be,
And of his table round.’

11.

She brought him to a river-side,
And also to a tree,
Whereon a copper basin hung,
And many shields to see.

12.

He struck so hard the basin broke ;
And Tarquin soon he spied :
Who drove a horse before him fast,
Whereon a knight lay tied.

L

13.

'Sir knight,' then said Sir Lancelot,
'Bring me that horse-load hither,
And lay him down and let him rest;
We'll try our force together:

14.

'For, as I understand, thou hast,
So far as thou art able,
Done great despite and shame unto
The Knights of the Round Table.'

15.

'If thou be of the table round,'
Quoth Tarquin speedily,
'Both thee and all thy fellowship
I utterly defy.'

16.

'That's overmuch,' quoth Lancelot, 'though,
Defend thee bye and bye,'
They set their spears unto their steeds,
And each at other fly.

17.

They couched their spears—their horses ran
As though there had been thunder—
And struck them each amidst their shields,
Wherewith they broke in sunder.

18.

Their horses' backs brake under them,
The knights were both astound:
To avoid their horses they made haste
To light upon the ground.

19.

They took them to their shields full fast,
Their swords they drew out then,
With mighty strokes most eagerly,
Each at the other ran.

20.

They wounded were and bled full sore,
They both for breath did stand,
And leaning on their swords awhile,
Quoth Tarquin, 'Hold thy hand,

21.

'And tell to me what I shall ask.'
'Say on,' quoth Lancelot. 'Though'
'Thou art,' quoth Tarquin, 'the best knight
That ever I did know ;

22.

'And like a knight that I did hate :
So that thou be not he,
I will deliver all the rest,
And eke accord with thee.'

23.

'That is well said,' quoth Lancelot ;
'But sith it must be so,
What knight is that thou hatest thus?
I pray thee to me shew.'

24.

'His name is Lancelot du Lake,
He slew my brother dear ;
Him I suspect of all the rest :
I would I had him here.'

25.

'Thy wish thou hast, but yet unknown,
I am Lancelot du Lake,
Now knight of Arthur's table round ;
King Haud's son of Schuwake ;

26.

'And I desire thee do thy worst.'
'Ho, ho !' quoth Tarquin, 'ho !
One of us two shall end our lives
Before that we do go.

27.

'If thou be Lancelot du Lake,
Then welcome shalt thou be.
Wherefore see thou thyself defend,
For now defy I thee.'

28.

They buckled then together so
Like unto wild boars rashing ;
And with their swords and shields they ran,
At one another slashing :

29.

The ground besprinkled was with blood :
Tarquin began to yield :
For he gave back for weariness,
And low did bear his shield.

30.

This soon Sir Lancelot espied,
He leaped upon him then,
He pulled him down upon his knee,
And, pushing off his helm,

31

Forthwith he struck his neck in two,
And, when he had so done,
From prison threescore knights and four
Delivered every one.

THE FOOTPRINTS IN THE SNOW.

A TALE FOR CHRISTMAS.

[*Spell and write*]

buried, unhesitating, horizon, desolate, protector, difficulty, affrighted, perplexed, obscured, evidently, contrasting, answered.

The snow had fallen thickly for many days, and the pathway across the wide heath was no longer to be seen ; all the deep holes were filled up, and the frozen streams covered over, so that it was no longer safe for any to pass that way. The one small cottage that stood in the midst was almost buried in snow, but fronting the door a path had been cleared for a few yards, that those within might open it freely. Beyond this short path, as far as the eye could reach, there were marks of footsteps, evidently those of a strong man, who knew the road, and had walked with firm unhesitating tread. No other landmark was visible to the farthest verge of the horizon ; all around was one desolate waste of dazzling whiteness.

Within, round the embers of yesterday's fire, lay three children sleeping. The curly head of the youngest rested on the shoulder of his eldest brother, his delicate face and childish limbs contrasting well with those of his sturdy protector. The other boy was lying a short distance from these two, rolled up in a woollen cloth that

concealed him from view. The little one was the first to open his eyes : 'Wake, brothers, wake,' he shouted eagerly—'I see the dawn through the cracks of the door ; we must go to join our father !' As he spoke he ran to the entrance, and opening the door, looked out on the snow. His eldest brother followed him, and smiled when he saw how the pathway had been cleared that they might start without difficulty. 'See what our good father has done for us, little one !' he said.

'And can you see his footprints, brother ?' asked the child.

'Yes, I see them plainly—long strides they are, your small legs will hardly reach so far.' The boy looked grave for a moment, then answered with a smile : 'He will have thought of that.'

'Let us wake Philip, and then set off at once,' said the eldest, while the little one running on a few steps, compared his tiny foot with the first print he found in the snow.

Philip was no light sleeper. 'Shut the door,' he grumbled out at last ; 'why do you let the cold air in ?'

'It is time to go, Philip ; our father waits for us in the valley.'

'There is no hurry—let me alone. I shall be there as soon as you.'

'But, Philip, the sun will melt the footprints in the snow, and you have no other track across the wide heath. Come, ere it is too late.'

'The sun will not be up these two hours,' replied Philip ; 'I shall have caught you up before then.'

'But the wind may rise, dear brother, and drift the snow over them. Oh, Philip, come—do come ; what will our father think if his children delay to join him ?'

The only reply Philip made was to roll over on the other side and compose himself to sleep again. 'Since you will not heed me, I must go,' said the eldest brother, turning sadly away to join the little one.

'But why does not Philip come?' asked the child, when he saw him alone.

'He is asleep, and will not stir.'

'Brother, let me go back and call him.'

'No, little one—no, it is useless, and you will be too late: I hear the moaning of the wind; if it rises, the snow will sweep across the track, and we shall not be able to follow our father; take thy staff and come.'

'But if we tell him again of the beautiful valley, will he not hear us, brother; of the flowers that grow there, and the sweet meadows that are always green?'

'No, my little one, he will not hear, for he loves sleep better: come away;' and the child, bearing his staff in his hand, followed in the footprints across the deep wide snow.

Small as he was, it was not hard for him, for he trod so carefully just where his father had trodden, that he found a firm footing, and neither slipped nor fell, and the steps were not too wide apart for his little feet; for his father, knowing who was to follow him, had thought tenderly how the little one might fare. Indeed, it was easier for him than for his elder brother, for he sometimes thought the steps all too short, and would fain go on at a stride as one able to walk alone. Then he would sink into the soft snow, and call out affrighted, but presently scrambled up and was on his way again. Still these falls wearied him not a little; so that when, farther on, the steps became longer, he had sometimes much difficulty in reaching from one footprint to the next. And here the little one found

the advantage of all the care with which he had walked at first; for whenever he came to a hard place, he leaned lightly on his staff, and so leaped over to the next footprint, thanking his father with a glad heart, that he had marked out the way so plainly for him, and furnished him with so stout a staff. Once, indeed, he tried to leap without his staff, and had nearly fallen; but this so alarmed him, that he never tried it again. Sometimes, too, he was a little perplexed by the falls of his elder brother, which obscured his father's footprints, and made them difficult to find; but the great love of his young heart yearning to see his father, and the great fear of misleading any who might come after him, kept him from ever failing, after waiting and trying a little, to find the right way.

[*Write from dictation*]

Over the desolate ground, and through many a perplexing difficulty, he walked on with unhesitating steps towards the horizon, following in the footsteps of his father, which were much obscured.

THE FOOTPRINTS IN THE SNOW—*concluded.*

[*Spell and write*]

dangerous, perceptible, treacherous, deceitful, unconscious, remembered, hurricane, discouraged, effaced, messengers, strengthened, easier, travelling, shuddered.

The sun was rising high in the heavens, and they had crossed nearly half-way over the heath, when the footprints thawing a little, became more difficult and slippery than at first.

'It seems to me,' said the elder brother, looking back,

‘that it is more dangerous to walk just in the footprints than a little on one side.’

But his young brother prayed him not to venture. ‘You will go wider and wider from the path, and lose the way at last.’

‘No, indeed,’ said the eldest, smiling down at him, ‘I have not so little love to our father as to run any risk ; I shall walk close beside the path, and it will be the same thing, you will see.’ So he walked by the little one, and at first his steps kept even pace with him, but presently he fell short a very little, so little that it was hardly perceptible. ‘Never mind,’ he said, ‘I can make it up in the next leap ;’ but because he thought this so easy to do, he did it not, and so fell more and more behind, while the little one passing on with great care, found firmer footing and easier travelling.

And now the little one being in advance, came to a narrow bridge across a dangerous passage between some rocks ; here the snow had drifted, so that it looked firm and even to the tread, while it was in truth a treacherous ravine, into which many travellers had fallen and been lost for ever. He passed safely over, because he trod only in his father’s steps, and indeed he knew not nearly all the danger of that deceitful pass. But the elder brother having by this time swerved greatly from the right path, was now walking straight towards the place of danger, all unconscious that it was not firm ground, when a fearful rushing wind swept over the heath behind him, and as it whirled by, he fancied he heard a shriek as of one in great danger, and he remembered Philip, and looked back. Over all the country he had crossed lay dark angry clouds, and the snow was blown hither and thither by the wind, and whirled round and round, so that it was blinding to

the sight, and none could find their way through it to the valley below. Then the boy shuddered with fear, and prayed for Philip; and as he did so, the thought of his own danger struck him, and seizing his staff firmly, he set himself to find the beaten track again. He was amazed, to see how far he had wandered from it, and when he turned towards it, it seemed as if the hurricane and the snow-drift beat against him to drive him back. But he was too much alarmed to be discouraged—the thought that he might be lost in the snow, and never see his father, gave him strength, and he only strove the more, though at every step his difficulties increased. Now the snow was so deep that he sank in it; now it had risen to so high a bank, that he must clamber over it; running streams, formed by the melted snow, crossed his way, and rocks hidden by it tripped him up. Many times he was almost despairing, but then the staff in his hand would save him from a fall, or through the whirling snow he would catch a glimpse of the little one walking steadily onwards, or the sound of his voice singing some sweet hymn of praise would reach him. So he strove on and on till he regained the path; but, alas! it was no longer so easy to walk in as before; the fresh-fallen snow had almost effaced the traces of his father's steps, and the cold wind numbed his limbs, and made every step one of pain and difficulty.

Now, by this time the little one had reached the verge of the heath, where it was bordered by high rocks with dark caverns under them, through which all travellers must pass who would go from the wide heath to the beautiful valley. As he drew near these, and saw how solemn and dreary they looked, and how small and dark was the passage through them, his heart failed him; but he took

courage when he remembered that even here the footprints would not fail him, and that his father expected him at the other side, and passed on still singing: As he entered, he grasped his staff with a firmer hand, and glancing back once across the heath, saw how the foot-steps, which for him were still quite plain, had led him to that spot. Then he smiled, and bowing his head, went in, and here also were the footprints visible even in the darkness, as if they shone with a light of their own, and he groped his way, creeping from step to step, finding in these all his strength, in his staff all his comfort, till he came to one spot so dark that he felt frightened to go forward; he feared his father had quite forgotten him, and there was no longer a pathway to the happy valley. It was but for a moment, and while he feared he still groped here and there with his staff, till, lo! even there, in the darkest depths of the cavern, the beloved foot had been planted, and the mark was plainly to be seen. Then he followed, happy and trusting again; and as he did so, suddenly the valley burst upon his sight, the glad songs of the messengers sent by his father to meet him broke on his ear, and he went his way rejoicing to the dear father and the beloved home where he would rest so sweetly, where there would be no more snow.

And the elder brother was almost sinking amid the perils of the way, while the little one lay sleeping in his father's bosom; but that watchful father knew the danger he was in, and while he was yet afar off, sent to meet him, so that he was helped, and comforted, and strengthened before he reached the rocks which he was compelled to pass alone. Then, indeed, his heart sank with dread; for looking back as he went in, he saw how far his feet had strayed from the appointed path, and he feared to go

forward. It was a dreadful passage that he had, but the voice of the little one who waited for him helped him on, and the great longing that he had to behold the face of his father enabled him to bear and to overcome, so that he, too, at last reached the happy valley, and rested in his father's bosom.

But alas for Philip, who delayed to follow when he was called. He started, indeed, but the snow was falling fast, and the footsteps were hard to find, and so at last he lay down to sleep again, and never beheld the face of his father, or saw his brothers any more.

Dear children, this beautiful Christmas-time, while the snow lies deep upon the earth, shall we not walk towards our happy Home in His footsteps who hath said : ' Suffer the little children to come unto me ? '

[Write from dictation]

The road became more dangerous ; the footsteps were hardly perceptible—nay, almost effaced ; the path was treacherous and deceitful, and the hurricane came ; but he was strengthened when he remembered that his father had gone before. The eldest was enabled to regain the path, but his difficulties so increased, he was almost despairing, but went on steadfastly to the end.





STORY OF AN ELEPHANT.

[*Spell and write*]

vindicate, valuable, dishonesty, condemned, acquainted, remonstrances, resolved, salutation, recognised, circumstances, unmerited.

A female elephant, belonging to a gentleman in Calcutta, who was ordered from the upper country to Chittagong, on the route thither broke loose from her keeper, and making her way to the woods, was lost. The unhappy keeper tried every means to vindicate himself; but his master, angry at the loss of so valuable an animal, refused to listen to any of his excuses, branded him with dishonesty, and charged him with having sold the elephant. The unfortunate keeper was tried for the theft, and being convicted, was condemned to work on the roads for life, and his wife and children sold for slaves.

About twelve years after this event, this man, who was known to be well acquainted with taming elephants, was sent into the country with a party to assist in catching wild ones. They at last came upon a herd, amongst which the man fancied he saw the elephant, for the loss of which he had been condemned. He resolved to approach it, nor could the strongest remonstrances of the party dissuade him from the attempt. As he advanced towards the animal, he called her by name, when she immediately recognised his voice; she waved her trunk in the air as a token of salutation, and kneeling down, allowed him to mount her neck. She afterwards assisted in taking other elephants, and decoyed into the trap three young ones, to which she had given birth since her escape. The keeper returned to his master with the elephant; and the singular circumstances attending her recovery being told, he regained his character; and as a reward for his unmerited sufferings, had a pension settled on him for life.

[Write from dictation]

The valuable elephant having been lost, the servant was immediately convicted for his apparent dishonesty; and in the singular circumstances of the case, he had to endure unmerited punishment, spite of his remonstrances.





THE TWO STEP-SISTERS.

[Spell and write]

marriage, meadow, service, frightened, carelessly, boughs, brindled.

Once on a time, there was a couple, and each of them had a daughter by a former marriage. The woman's daughter was dull and lazy, and would never turn her hand to anything; and the man's daughter was brisk and ready, but somehow or other, she never could do anything to her step-mother's liking.

One day, the two girls were trying who could spin fastest, and they agreed that she whose thread first snapped should go down the well. The man's daughter's thread broke first, and down she went; but she found a green meadow at the bottom, so she was not hurt.

So she walked on till she came to a hedge. 'Pray do not tread hard on me,' said the hedge, 'and I will help you another time.' Then the lassie trod so carefully, she scarce touched a twig.

A little farther, she came on a brindled cow, with a milking-pail on her horn. 'Be so good as to milk me,' said the cow; 'and see if I do not help you some day.' So the little maid did as the cow told her; and then she went on, and found a big wether. 'Please clip off my wool,' said the sheep, 'and see if I don't help you some day.' Yes; she was willing enough. The sheep kept quite still, and she clipped him so neatly, there wasn't a scratch on his skin.

A little farther on, she came to an apple-tree. 'Be so good as to pluck my apples off me,' said the tree; 'but when you beat them down, don't shake me too hard; and see if I don't help you some day or other.' She did as the tree bade her, and then walked on a long, long way, till she came to a great farmhouse, where lived an old hag and her daughter; there she went to ask for a place.

The old hag said no; but the maiden begged so hard; that at last they let her stay. So the old hag sent her to fetch water in a sieve. She thought it strange; but when she came to the well, the little birds began to sing:

'Daub in clay,
Stuff in straw.'

So she did; and found she could carry water in the sieve well enough.

Now, she had to milk the kine; but they were so restless, there was no getting near them. But the little birds sung outside:

'A little drop, a tiny sup,
For the little birds to drink it up.'

Yes; she did that—she just milked a tiny drop for the birds, and then all the cows stood still.

The old hag was very angry when she found the maiden could do everything she told her. 'It is no good keeping you,' she said. 'We had best part; so take your

wages, and be off.' Then the old hag drew out three caskets—one red, one green, and one blue—and of these the lassie was to choose one as wages for her service. Now, she didn't know at all which to choose; but the little birds sang :

'Don't take the red, don't take the green,
But take the blue, where may be seen
Three little crosses all in a row :
We saw the marks, and so we know.'

So she took the blue, and the old witch was angry, and she and her daughter ran after her. Then the maiden was frightened.

'Come here to me,' said the apple-tree; 'I'll help you; for if they catch you, they will tear you to death, and take the casket from you.' So she hid among the apple-tree boughs; and the old witch could not find her, and turned home again. But soon she came back once more, and the maiden heard her.

'Come here to me,' said the wether, 'and hide under my fleece.' So the witch couldn't find her again. But when the girl came up to the cow, she heard the witch behind her once more.

'Come to me,' said the cow; 'I'll hide you.' So the cow hid her; and the old hag couldn't find her, and turned back once more.

Then the maiden went a long, long way, till she came to the hedge; and then she heard the witch behind her again; but the hedge hid her quite safely, and made himself so big and tall, that one had to think twice before crossing him. So when the man's daughter got home, her step-mother and sister were more spiteful against her than ever. She couldn't get leave to live with them; they drove her out into the pigsty: that was to be her

house. So she scrubbed it out so neat and clean, and then she opened her casket, just to look at her wages; but when she unlocked it, she saw gold and silver and many lovely things, which came streaming out till all the walls were hung with them, and the pigsty was grander than a palace.

When the step-mother and her daughter came to see this, the woman's daughter made up her mind to go out and serve too, that she might get just such another gold casket. So she went down the well, and found herself on a lovely green meadow; and when she had walked a bit, she came to the hedge.

‘Don’t tread hard on me, pray,’ said the hedge.

‘Oh,’ said she, ‘what should I care for a bundle of twigs?’ and stamped over it till it groaned again.

A little farther on, the cow begged to be milked; so she milked as much as she wanted to drink, tossed down the pail, and walked on.

Then she came to the sheep, and when it asked to be clipped, she said ‘Yes,’ and did it, but so carelessly, that she cut great pieces out of the poor sheep, and she carried off all the wool.

A little while after, she came to the apple-tree.

‘Be so good as to pluck the apples off me,’ said the apple-tree; ‘but, please, take care not to beat me too hard.’

Well, she plucked those nearest to her, and thrashed down those she could not reach; but she didn’t care how she did it, and broke off and tore down great boughs, and ate till she was as full as she could be, and threw down the rest under the tree.

So when she had gone a good bit farther, she came to the farm where the old witch lived, and she begged so for a place, that at last she was hired. The first thing she

had to do was to fetch water in a sieve. But she would not listen to the song of birds, but pelted them with clay till they flew away; and so she got home with an empty sieve, and was well scolded by the old witch. Then she was to go and milk the cows; and they wouldn't stand still. Then the birds sang again:

‘A little drop, a tiny sup,
For the little birds to drink it up.’

But she beat and banged the cows about, and pelted the birds, and went home without any milk. The old hag gave her blows as well as hard words that time, and said she wasn't worth keeping, but for wages she should have leave to choose whichever casket she pleased. Then sang the little birds:

‘Don't take the red, don't take the green,
But choose the blue, where may be seen
Three little crosses all in a row:
We saw the marks, and so we know.’

She didn't care a pin for what the birds sang, but took the red, which caught her eye most. And so she set out on her road home; and she went along quietly enough—no one came after her.

So when she got home, her mother was ready to jump with joy. But, lo! when they opened the casket, there came tumbling out nothing but toads, and frogs, and snakes; and worse than that, whenever the woman's daughter opened her mouth, out popped a toad or a snake, so that at last there was no living in the house with her.

That was all the wages she got for going out to service with the old witch.

*[Write from dictation the paragraph beginning
‘So when she got home.’]*

THE BOY AND THE NETTLE.

A boy, playing in the fields, got stung by a nettle. He ran home to his mother, telling her that he had but touched the nasty weed, and it had stung him. 'It was your just touching it, my boy,' said the mother, 'that caused it to sting you; the next time you meddle with a nettle, grasp it tightly, and it will do you no hurt.'

[*Write the above fable from dictation.*]

THE EAGLE AND THE JACKDAW.

An eagle made a swoop from a high rock, and carried off a lamb. A jackdaw, who saw the exploit, thinking that he could do the like, bore down with all the force he could muster upon a ram, intending to bear him off as a prize. But his claws becoming entangled in the wool, he made such a fluttering in his efforts to escape, that the shepherd, seeing through the whole matter, came up and caught him; and, having clipped his wings, carried him home to his children at nightfall. 'What bird is this, father, that you have brought us?' exclaimed the children.

'Why,' said he, 'if you ask himself, he will tell you that he is an eagle; but if you will take my word for it, I know him to be but a jackdaw.'

[*Write from dictation*]

The feeble fluttering jackdaw, intending to imitate the exploit of the eagle, was entangled in the wool; and the shepherd having caught him, carried him home to his children at nightfall, and so he learned the evil of trying to be what he was not.



DIGGING FOR A WOMBAT.

[Spell and write]

determined, amazingly, difficulty, perpendicular, circular,
barricaded, suspected, mysterious.

We have had a determined attempt to secure a wombat. There are numbers of wombats all about here ; but neither this summer nor last have we been able to get sight of them—they are amazingly cunning animals. They make their holes where the scrub is so high and thick that you cannot possibly get a glimpse of them during moonlight nights, for night is the only time they venture out. They dig their holes so deep, and to such a length, that it is next to impossible to get at them. Besides this, they make their dens near each other, so that there are whole underground villages of them, and most of them have two

entrances if not three, and no doubt they all have holes through into their neighbours' dens. Anybody can understand, therefore, what a difficulty it must be to catch them. I think I have already mentioned the perpendicular circular holes that go down into these dens, and are commonly from eight to ten feet deep. These are said to be dug by the natives to get at them, but how they can manage to dig, I cannot think. They are so narrow that no white man can stoop in them; and how they are dug, and the earth thrown out of them, seems quite a mystery; perhaps they crouch down and dig between their legs, for they crouch into much less compass than any white man could. But then there is another difficulty: how can they contrive to keep the creature right under the hole while they are digging it? I have heard that they set a child with a stick to hem him in, but then he has two or three holes, so that they must have two or three children.

But let that be as it may, we were determined to have a wombat, and as we had neither black nor white children to help us, we made use of our dogs, and very good substitutes they are too. We sent them down, one at each end, and soon had them furiously barking at the creature a long way under ground, whilst it kept up a constant low, deep growl. As we wanted to know exactly where the beast lay, I went down myself twelve feet into the den, with a strap fastened to my leg, to pull me back in case I should stick fast; and this will shew what a large animal it must be, when I could crawl in for twelve feet. I could not, however, go farther, because here the burrow suddenly divided and contracted, just enough to prevent my going on; so I shoved myself out, and we sent Prin in again, with a string tied to him,

by which means we found out how far he was from one end, and the other end we stopped up with stakes. We then set to and dug a hole down to where we supposed him to lie. We sank two feet, and then we found that he had moved considerably towards the open end, spite of the dogs, one of which we had sent in each way. Well, we sank another hole right over where he then was, but on coming down, he was not there; he was now about half-way between our two holes. The dogs were furious. Pincher had a regular fight with him in his den, and Prinny came up with his mouth full of wombat hair. Before we could finish our third hole night came on, so we safely barricaded him in, and left him till next morning. Next morning the dogs had him again at bay on the same spot, and we made ourselves sure of him; but before we could get down, the dogs lost all their ardour, and we suspected that, by some mysterious means or other, he had got away. We could not conceive how this could be, for all the entrances or holes that we knew of were carefully stopped, except the one by which the dogs went in, and that was full in sight. However, so it was; when we cut through into his run, we found that the poor old fellow had employed himself in digging as fast as we had dug, and had formed a run at right angles of several yards, and made his escape into a neighbouring run, and stopped the earth after him, so that the dogs could not follow! I could not help saying: 'Hurrah, plucky old wombat!'

This last run was so full of foul air or choke-damp, that the dogs could not breathe in it, and the candles would not burn. So ended our wombat-hunting that time, but we mean to have another try before long. We dug on this occasion altogether thirty feet in depth, by six feet long, and two wide. But wombat-catching must

always be difficult ; for what can you do with a creature that burrows ten or twelve feet under ground, and makes runs of from twenty to thirty yards, and all the time can dig away as fast as you can ? My scheme, however, is to make a box-trap, such as they catch cats in in a rabbit-warren, with two trap-doors, and fix it on one mouth of his hole, stopping well up the other. Alfred and I mean to make one as soon as we can get the time, and while we are among the wombats.

Howitt's Boy's Adventures in Australia.

[*Write from dictation*]

Amazingly difficult as the task was, we determined to catch one of these beasts, and sank perpendicular circular holes into its run, having barricaded the two ends of its mysterious den.

THE HOMES OF ENGLAND.

1.

The stately homes of England !
How beautiful they stand,
Amidst their tall ancestral trees,
O'er all the pleasant land !
The deer across their greensward bound
Through shade and sunny gleam ;
And the swan glides by them with the sound
Of some rejoicing stream.

2.

The merry homes of England !
Around their hearths by night,
What gladsome looks of household love
Meet in the ruddy light !

The blessed homes of England !
How softly on their bowers
Is laid the holy quietness
That breathes from Sabbath hours !

3.

The cottage homes of England !
By thousands on her plains
They are smiling o'er the silvery brooks,
And round the hamlet fanes.
Through glowing orchards forth they peep,
Each from its nook of leaves ;
And fearless there the lowly sleep,
As the bird beneath their eaves.

4.

The free, fair homes of England !
Long, long, in hut and hall,
May hearts of native proof be reared
To guard each hallowed wall !
And green for ever be the groves,
And bright the flowery sod,
Where first the child's glad spirit loves
Its country and its God !

F. HERMAN.





DICK VARLEY'S FIRST BUFFALO-HUNT.

[*Spell and write*]

calculated, buffaloes, myriad, immediate, enormous, ruminating, diminished, innumerable, ferocious, interrupted, disappeared, furiously, terrific, especially, permission, accomplished, resemblance.

Dick raised his head as directed, and the scene that met his view was indeed well calculated to send a shock to the heart of an ardent sportsman. The vast plain beyond was quite blackened with countless herds of buffaloes, which were browsing on the rich grass. They were still so far distant, that their bellowing and the trampling of their myriad hoofs only reached the hunters like a faint murmur on the breeze. In the immediate foreground, however, there was a group of about half-a-

dozen buffalo-cows feeding quietly, and in the midst of them an enormous old bull was enjoying himself in his wallow—a bath of mud and water. The animals, towards which our hunters now crept with murderous intent, are the fiercest and the most powerful of the ruminating animals of the western wilderness. The name of *buffalo*, however, is not correct; the animal is the *bison*, and bears no resemblance whatever to the buffalo proper; but as the hunters of the far west, and, indeed, travellers generally have adopted the misnomer, we bow to custom, and adopt it too.

The advance of white men to the west has driven buffaloes to the prairies between the Missouri and the Rocky Mountains, and has somewhat diminished their numbers; but even thus diminished, they are still innumerable in the more distant plains.

When the old bull left his pleasant bath, another bull, scarcely, if at all, less ferocious-looking, stepped forward to take his turn; but he was interrupted by a volley from the hunters, which scattered the animals right and left, and sent the mighty herds in the distance flying over the prairie in wild terror. The very turmoil of their own mad flight added to their panic, and the continuous thunder of their hoofs was heard until the last of them disappeared on the horizon. The family-party which had been fired at, however, did not escape so well. Joe's rifle wounded a fat young cow, and Dick Varley brought it down. Henri had done his best; but, as the animals were too far distant for him to see them, he missed the cow he fired at, and hit the young bull whose bath had been interrupted. The others scattered and fled.

'Well done, Dick!' exclaimed Joe Blount, as they all ran up to the cow that had fallen; 'your first shot at

the buffalo was a good one. Come now, and I'll shew ye how to cut it up an' carry off the tid-bits.'

'Wouldn't it be as well first to put the poor bull out of pain?' suggested Dick.

'Oh, he'll die soon enough,' replied Joe, tucking up his sleeves, and drawing his long hunting-knife.

Dick, however, was not satisfied with this way of looking at it. Saying that he would be back in a few minutes, he reloaded his rifle, and calling Crusoe to his side, walked quickly after the wounded bull, which was now hid from view in a hollow of the plain.

In a few minutes, he came in sight of it, and ran forward with his rifle in readiness.

'Down, Crusoe,' he whispered; 'wait for me here!'

Crusoe crouched on the grass instantly, and Dick advanced.

As he came on, the bull observed him, and turned round, bellowing with rage and pain to receive him. The aspect of the brute, on a near view, was so terrible, that Dick involuntarily stopped too, and gazed with a mingled feeling of wonder and awe; while the beast before him bristled with passion, and blood-streaked foam dropped from its open jaws, and its eyes glared furiously. Seeing that Dick did not advance, the bull charged him with a terrific roar; but the youth had firm nerves, and, although the rush of such a savage creature at full speed was calculated to try the courage of any man, especially one who had never seen a buffalo-bull before, Dick did not lose presence of mind. He remembered the many stories he had listened to of this very thing that was now happening, so, crushing down his excitement as well as he could, he cocked his rifle, and awaited the charge. He knew that it was of no use to fire at the head of the

advancing foe, as the thickness of the skull, together with the matted hair on the forehead, rendered it proof against a bullet.

When the bull was within a yard of him, he leaped lightly to one side, and it passed. Just as it did so, Dick aimed at its heart, and fired; but the ball entered the shoulder too high; and the bull, checking himself as well as he could in his headlong rush, turned round and made at Dick again.

The failure, coupled with the excitement, proved too much for Dick; he could not resist discharging his second barrel at the brute's head as it came on. He might as well have fired at a brick-wall; it shook its shaggy front, and with a hideous bellow, thundered forward. Again, Dick sprang to one side; but, in doing so, a tuft of grass or a stone caught his foot, and he fell heavily to the ground.

Up to this point, Crusoe's fine training had nailed him to the spot where he had been left, although the twitching of every fibre in his body, and a low continuous whine, shewed how gladly he would have hailed permission to join in the combat; but the instant he saw his master down, and the buffalo turning to charge again, he sprang forward with a roar that would have done credit to his bovine enemy, and seized him by the nose. So vigorous was the rush, that he well-nigh pulled the bull down on its side. One toss of its head, however, sent Crusoe high into the air, but it accomplished this feat at the expense of its nose, which was torn by the dog's teeth.

Scarcely had Crusoe touched the ground, which he did with a sounding thump, than he sprang up, and flew at his enemy again. This time, however, he adopted the plan of barking furiously, and biting by rapid yet terrible snaps, as he found a chance; thus keeping the bull

entirely occupied, and affording Dick a chance of reloading his rifle, which he was not slow to do. Dick then stepped close up; and, while the two combatants were roaring in each other's faces, he shot the buffalo through the heart. It fell to the earth with a deep groan.

Crusoe's rage instantly vanished on beholding this, and he seemed to be filled with tumultuous joy at his master's escape, for he gamboled round him, and whined and fawned upon him in a manner that could not be misunderstood.

'Good dog; thank'ee, my pup!' said Dick, patting Crusoe's head as he stooped to brush the dust from his leggings. 'I don't know what would ha' become o' me but for your help, Crusoe.'

[Write from dictation]

The innumerable buffaloes, ruminating on the prairie, were scattered; and rushing furiously along with a terrific noise, disappeared on the horizon. The ferocious old bull, however, was interrupted in his course; and after a struggle, his death was accomplished: the dog tumultuously gamboled round his master.



THE STARS.

[Spell and write]

obscures, azure, firmament, expanse, Omnipotence, inscribed,
celestial, sustained, eternity, sovereign.

1.

No cloud obscures the summer sky,
The moon in brightness walks on high,
And, set in azure, every star,
Shines, a pure gem of heaven, afar !

2.

Child of the earth ! Oh, lift thy glance
To yon bright firmament's expanse !
The glories of its realm explore,
And gaze, and wonder, and adore !

3.

Doth it not speak to every sense
The marvels of Omnipotence ?
See'st thou not there the Almighty's name
Inscribed in characters of flame ?

4.

Count o'er those lamps of quenchless light,
That sparkle through the shades of night ;
Behold them ! Can a mortal boast
To number that celestial host ?

5.

Mark well each little star, whose rays
In distant splendour meet thy gaze ;
Each is a world, by God sustained,
Who from eternity hath reigned.

6.

What then art thou ! Oh, child of clay !
Amid creation's grandeur, say ?
E'en as an insect on the breeze,
E'en as a dewdrop, lost in seas !

7.

Yet fear thou not ; the Sovereign hand
Which spread the ocean and the land,
And hung the rolling spheres in air,
Hath e'en for thee a Father's care.

F. HEMANS.



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